

Hillsborough County Public Schools

A Plan of Work that Prescribes Success for All

The School District of Hillsborough County addresses the achievement gap from a multifaceted perspective. A task force, which represents the community, school district, parents, and students, is in place to solicit input and facilitate action. Because data reflecting performance, participation in college entrance exams, and the graduation rate did not mirror the distribution of subgroups representing the school district, the Plan of Work became the collaborative efforts of the task force. It prescribes the goals and initiatives to create a fluid transition for students from kindergarten to graduation, with college preparation as the ultimate goal for all.

The Plan of Work provides specific initiatives for low-performing students, especially African Americans and Hispanics, who are underachieving. Consistent identification of underachieving students is occurring throughout all program levels. Data is disaggregated, prior to the start of the year, and a School Improvement Plan is developed, which outlines goals and initiatives for specific subgroups in each school. The Continuous Improvement Model is then used at all levels to ensure that a year's worth of instruction results in a year or more worth of learning and that appropriate interventions are prescribed in a timely manner.

The district-wide approach to success for all students is funded through Title I, Title II, and Title III grants/entitlements; and district funds. Equity and access into challenging and rigorous coursework is assured through automatic and objective scheduling of middle and high school students into classes. The underachieving students are identified, and those determined to have the potential to be successful in Advanced Placement Courses are placed. All schools are structured and employees trained to establish themselves as Professional Learning Communities so that their focus is always on learning.

The district's Plan of Work to eliminate the achievement gap is resulting in an increase in the graduation rate and better preparation for college entrance examinations; especially since Algebra I classes are offered sooner and participation in Advanced Placement Courses is increasing. Hillsborough County Public Schools was awarded the "Bigger, Bolder, Better Special Achievement" Award by the Tampa Bay Partnership for achieving the highest graduation rate among the Top 25 Metro Areas in the U.S. The *Florida State Agency Report* on Minority and Underrepresented Student Achievement reported increased participation in SAT, PSAT, and National Merit, specifically African Americans and Hispanics.

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