

## Preliminary Report, Highlights: Sunrise, Volusia County

High Free and Reduced Lunch, 54%

*The Sunrise family combines order with nurture, and standards with flexibility, to generate the perfect high performance octane for their students.*

**INFUSE SHARED VALUES:** Sunrise students are totally immersed in the school's philosophy "Trustworthiness, Truthfulness, Active Listening, No Put Downs and Personal Best." These are the "Lifelong Guidelines" that sum up the expectations for all students. It works because the parents share and reinforce these values at home. Teachers believe that through this program, "students become the role models of academic excellence." The guidelines are part of the Integrated Thematic Instruction Model which outlines developmentally appropriate curriculum for and between grade levels, incorporating achievement goals. Intertwining academics and "Lifelong Guidelines" with total stakeholder buy-in drives this school's performance.

**Results:** Grade 4 FCAT Writing: 3.7, above district and state; percentage of students scoring at level 3 or above, Grade 3 Reading: 82%, Math: 86%; grade 4 Reading: 82%, Math 80%.

### Practices that Promote High Performance:

- Establishing a relationship of respect and openness with parents, enlisting them as full-fledged partners
- Communicating clear, consistent teacher expectations: flexibility, allegiance to goals, and collaboration
- Retaining teachers (very little turnover/absence) by supporting their needs and empowering their leadership

**FLEX the BUDGET:** Volusia was the first Charter District in the state. Financial flexibility came with the Charter and also increased local responsibility to spend wisely and well. The principal and staff prioritized their Integrated Thematic Instruction plan and professional development for teachers and parents. Funding came from the school budget and significant parent support, including \$200 for every teacher's instructional goals. Programs in use are: Waterford Reading (a computerized self-monitoring system), FCAT Explorer, No-Zone, Scholastic Reading Inventory, and Saxon Math and Phonics. The school also funds an extended day program for 180 students. All programs are linked to assessment and supported by technology.

**Results:** School Grades: 2000: A; 2001: C; 2002: A.

### Practices that Promote High Performance:

- Providing development opportunities for parents focused on elements of the instructional programs
- Enhancing the curriculum by using real world situations and experiences for greater retention
- Providing teachers with intensive training on the programs that the school uses and techniques such as cognitive coaching, cooperative learning, Parent-to-Kid and positive discipline

**CREATE a HUB:** No detail is too small to create an atmosphere conducive to learning and welcoming to parents and partners. The school is immaculately maintained and even the lighting has been modified, based on research, to suit young learners. Sunrise has created a hub with high expectations for on-task, engaged behavior and cooperative learning. The teachers also participate in training in many "newly researched brain areas" to better understand and individualize student instruction. The school has a reputation of being "ahead of its time." Commitment to the school's vision is the heart of the hub. Based on their vision and goals, the principal and teachers continue to evaluate, re-evaluate and improve their educational approach.

**Results:** First "Principal of the Year" in Volusia; Blue Ribbon School

### Practices that Promote High Performance:

- Seeking resources, such as books for students, that directly support student achievement
- Maintaining an open door policy that allows parent concerns and bright ideas to come to the forefront
- Establishing a committee to research, seek and write grants for more inclusive buy-in and better results