**Part I- Current School Status**

1. **Supportive School Environment**
2. **School Mission and Vision**
   1. The mission of University Preparatory Academy (UPA) is to provide students with access to a college preparatory experience in historically underserved communities.
   2. UPA aims to provide students in historically underserved communities with access to a college preparatory experience. UPA’s vision is reflected through three key pillars of our program:

**1.) Curriculum and instruction for rigorous college preparation**

**2.) Continuous improvement through data utilization and collaboration, and**

**3.) Single gender classrooms**

1. **School Environment**

UPA takes deliberate efforts to learn about the unique identity of each student. In addition to reviewing previous school/school year records information (ex. Final grades, state test scores, behavior logs, teacher anecdotal records, health files,) we ensure that each teacher and child has an opportunity to build a strong, positive and supportive relationship through:

* Beginning of year student interest inventories
* Parent conferences both before and during the start of school year
* Class team-building activities
* Daily lunch with students
* Regular and on-going conversations with parents about the student’s interests and strengths
* Morning assemblies

These efforts not only help teachers learn about student cultures, but also foster a safe and caring environment for students. Each morning, students and parents are personally greeted by school staff and administration as they enter the building whether walking, or riding the car or bus. Students are able to eat breakfast in grade-level breakfast areas with their classmates, teachers and administrators in order to have a positive start to their school day. Teachers and administrators also eat lunch and attend recess with students not only to ensure their safety, but also to allow time for to create meaningful connection with students outside of the classroom. At dismissal, students are escorted by adults to designated areas for bus pick up, car pick up, after school program pick up, etc. Each area is populated by multiple staff members to ensure order and student safety at all times.

Teachers employ school-wide signals and a progressive discipline system that are easily understood by everyone at the school, including parents. Teachers also have developed classroom management systems that communicate clear expectations for behavior, and establish reasonable consequences that are applied consistently and are aligned with the school wide culture of expectations and behavior. These management systems:

* Teach and reward students for meeting school and classroom behavior expectations
* Provide clear and consistent responses to behaviors that do not support learning and growth
* Identify students in need of additional social and emotional supports and systematically provide those supports to students as appropriate

UPA offers social and emotional supports to students through guest speakers, adult-student mentoring, peer mentoring, 1:1 and small group counseling. We acknowledge that students are capable of making both good and bad choices. At UPA, there are positive motivators for when a student chooses to follow a rule or procedure and negative consequences for when a student chooses to break a rule or procedure. Students quickly learn that when they do good things, good things happen, and when they do bad things, bad things happen; every positive contribution results in a positive motivator and conversely every code of conduct violation results in a negative consequence. This is the basis of our student Code of Conduct. Thereby, students who choose not to meet the school community’s clearly defined standards for reasonable and acceptable behavior will not be permitted to disrupt the education of others. Without a firm and consistent discipline policy, none of what we envision for the school can happen. The following beliefs inform our Code of Conduct.

* **Safety:** The Code of Conduct is designed first and foremost to ensure that UPA students are physically and mentally safe at all times.
* **Respect:** Respect towards self, peers, and adults anchor UPA’s character development and helps build community within the school and beyond.
* **Self-discipline:** Students who are organized, focused and committed behave well in school, speak well in public, and are helpful to others will develop strong self-advocacy skills that will serve them well throughout their lives.
* **Making a big deal out of “little” problems:** At UPA, nothing is too small to address. There are no “little” problems; every seemingly small problem can quickly lead to more serious problems. No misbehavior goes unchecked at any time for any reason. We must acknowledge misbehavior, address it, and offer a consequence every time. Studies show that it is not the severity of the punishment that deters people from breaking rules, but quick and consistent application of consequences.
* **Clear consequences:** The students of UPA will know exactly what behavior is expected and what consequences will result if expectations are not met. UPA will always promptly communicate with parents about any disciplinary consequence.
* **Staying Firm and Positive:** UPA is firm and positive its approach to asserting authority. A firm and positive teacher uses the school’s discipline system in conjunction with their own systems, non-verbal cues, strong teacher-student relationships, strong teacher-family communication, positive reinforcement, academic motivation, and clear, well taught and re-taught rules and procedures.
* **Uninterrupted learning:** UPA’s Code of Conduct minimizes distractions in the classroom so that students can commit 100 percent of their attention to academic learning.

1. **Early Warning System**

Students at UPA are monitored closely to ensure that each student’s needs are being met on a consistent and on-going basis. As such, UPA has designed a system that allows staff to identify students who show early signs of academic or social/emotional needs. Thereafter, UPA staff quickly responds with the necessary supports to ensure those students’ success. The following indicators are included in this system:

* **Indicator 1-** Students with attendance below 90% excused or unexcused
* **Indicator 2-** Level 1 score on state test in ELA or Math

The current status of early warning indicators is as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Grade Level** | **Indicator 1**  **(# of students)** | **Indicator 2**  **(# of students)** |
| **K** | 9 | **N/A\*** |
| **1** | 7 | **N/A\*** |
| **2** | 7 | **N/A\*** |
| **3** | 3 | **15** |
| **4** | 3 | **18** |
| **5** | 3 | **25** |
| **6** | 6 | **22** |
| **7** | 5 | **32** |
| **8** | 2 | **14** |

\**Students in these grades do not take state assessments.*

To address the student needs indicative of the data above, particularly for students showing two more indicators, UPA will:

1. Execute attendance monitoring and support plan for students with less than 90% attendance which includes daily/weekly attendance monitoring for student, parent-student-administrator conferences, parent letters and calls, and on-going follow up as needed.
2. Collaborate with teachers to develop responsive learning assignments that will help students get on track to successfully complete courses.
3. Assess students and place in an appropriate, daily instructional intervention group for ELA/Math based on assessment results.
4. **Family and Community Involvement**

Family involvement and support is critical to the success of UPA and its students, UPA employs specific strategies and initiatives to ensure that parents feel informed, included and know that they are important partners. Those strategies include:

* Parent Open Houses and Family Nights
* Teacher-parent phone calls and meetings (both formal and informal)
* Monthly written communication from school to family
* Regular updates to school website
* Quarterly parent meetings (including Title I meetings)
* Teacher-parent-student conferences to discuss academic, social and emotional growth
* Mid quarter progress reports and end of quarter grades
* Parent volunteer program

UPA’s ongoing partnerships with our community partners allow us to both support family involvement and student achievement. We partner with organizations to help us offer both during and after school learning and enrichment opportunities. Our most unique partnership is with A.C.T, The Arts Conservatory for Teens, which provides skilled teaching artists who offer a variety of arts-based learning opportunities to our students during the day including vocal, and dance instruction. We also receive tremendous support from the following agencies:

* St Petersburg Parks and Recreation- school-wide celebrations
* TASCO- school-wide celebrations
* Urban League- community support
* COQWEBS- community support

1. **Effective School Leadership**

**School Leadership Team Membership & Duties**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Position** | **Leadership Responsibilities** |
| **Darius Adamson** | **Principal** | Serves as building and Instructional Leader; Oversees school leadership team and evaluates all staff; Oversees all school operations and manages school budget |
| **Rebecca Watson** | **Assistant Principal** | Facilitates teacher professional development and collaborative planning; Plans organizes and oversees implementation of curricular, instructional and assessment initiatives school-wide; Executes on-going teacher evaluation and support |
| **Crystal Boyd** | **K-4 Administrator, Testing Coordinator** | Provides administrative support to K-4 teachers, Manages K-4 parent relations and student discipline; Coordinates all standardized testing efforts; Coordinates community outreach; Coordinates technology infrastructure efforts |
| **Kalu Kalu** | **5-8 Administrator, ESE Coordinator** | Provides administrative support to 5-8 teachers; Manages 5-8 parent relations and student discipline;  Manages ESE services; Coordinates community outreach and partnerships, manages safety and custodial staff |

The administrative team holds weekly meetings to monitor the progress toward school goals. Implementation of action steps linked to strategic goals are reviewed and assessed during these meetings; and targeted next steps are generated to ensure that the school remains on track to achieve all goals and targets set. Other staff members collaborate directly with the leadership team to sharpen perspective on the growth and challenges linked to strategic goals. These staff members create strongest possible solutions necessary for success.

1. **Public and Collaborative Teaching**

The research is clear- teachers matter. UPA strongly believes in and has taken significant efforts to recruit, develop, retain, and support highly-qualified teachers. These effective as instructors and positive assets to the professional learning community. We have taken the following steps to ensure a strong teaching force:

* **Attracting, hiring and retaining effective teachers**

UPA conducted a nation-wide search for the best candidates for each teaching position. Applicants were vetted through a rigorous interview process which included 1:1 and/or group interviews, demonstration lessons conducted in person or via video and building tours. Recommendations were made by the administrative team and submitted to the principal for final approval.

* **Developing and supporting all teachers and specifically new teachers**

UPA conducted a thorough induction program for new teachers to provide them with the training and development they will need to become acclimated the educational program and expectations of UPA.  This program involved having teachers report for the school year three weeks prior to the start of the student school year to receive training in the curriculum, student expectations, and processes to be used at the school.  This training was planned by the principal and administrative team to ensure that teachers started the year off on a positive note with students.  It also helped to build the culture of high expectations at the school, allowing the staff to get to know one another and to build the collegial relationships necessary to ensure success of the students. The induction program will also include an accountability partner to work closely with throughout the school year.

Beyond the induction program, UPA has developed a comprehensive professional development plan that ensures teachers have the necessary skills they need to be successful with the high needs population University Preparatory Academy serves. The professional development plan was developed by the administrative team with input from teachers and was based on the assessed needs and performance of the teachers at the school.

1. **Ambitious Instructional Learning**

The UPA instructional learning philosophy is reflected through three (3) key pillars of our program.  These pillars are as follows:

1. Curriculum and Instruction for Rigorous College Preparation
2. Continuous Improvement through Data Utilization and Collaboration
3. Single Gender Classrooms

These pillars form the framework for school and student success.  Providing a rigorous curriculum that demands students to use higher order thinking skills and connected learning will ensure their progress toward graduation.  It will also better prepare them to attend and be successful at institutions of higher education and graduate from the same.  The use of data in collaborative work teams will provide the mechanism to plan, execute, assess, evaluate and reteach. The cornerstones for student success are embedded in the core curriculum, interventions for skills not mastered and opportunities to accelerate once skills are mastered.  Single gender classroom pedagogy embraces differences in learning styles of all students.  Ongoing professional development beginning prior to the opening of school and continuing throughout the year equips UPA teachers with the research and tools to successfully implement all parts of this success model.

* 1. **Instructional Program and Strategies**

Teachers at UPA deliver high quality standards-based instruction by implementing Florida Standards-Based curriculum through the following key tenets:

* Bite-sized, measurable, standards-aligned classroom objectives: Every class has bite-sized, measurable and standards-aligned daily objectives. Using multiple forms of assessments, teachers track their students’ mastery of the objectives and progress toward the ambitious academic goals.
* Modeled and guided practice: Teachers introduce the objectives by clearly modeling a process to attack the day’s lesson objectives. The teacher then leads the class into a guided practice of the skill, in which students model their own answers and thought processes, the goal of which is to ensure that every student is set up for sustained, successful independent practice.
* Independent practice: Students spend the bulk of the lesson in a sustained, successful independent practice, with several *“at bats”* to practice the new skill and/or knowledge on their own. In other words, students will do the *“heavy lifting*” of the tasks at hand, getting several opportunities to use their newly acquired academic knowledge and skills until they get it right.
* Intensive literacy and math instruction: Literacy and numeracy are the bases for success in K-12 and college education.  Extended core instructional time for reading/language arts and math will be implemented in order to remediate and enrich students in these critical areas. A large percent of UPA’s student population arrived at UPA with significant learning deficits which will necessitate providing an increased amount of time in reading/language arts and math. The increased time will be provided through the academic day support systems. Students will also receive an additional 60 minutes daily intervention instruction in reading or math to address specific learning deficits and promote swift growth.

**B. AVID:**  Advancement via Individual Determination, is a school-wide instructional system for students in Kindergarten through 12th grade (and post-secondary). The AVID College Readiness System is designed to increase the number of students who enroll in four-year colleges and succeed in higher education. The school-wide system creates and enhances the college-bound culture.  UPA believes AVID fully supports its college-preparatory mission and ensures that all students, regardless of grade, will have access to a rigorous college-prep educational experience**.** Further, teachers in grades 3-8 have been trained in high-yield, literacy-based AVID instructional strategies. They implement these strategies in all core subject areas to support literacy achievement for all students.

**C. Use of Technology:** Instructional technology is used as a tool in all classrooms to enhance and reinforce classroom instruction and for assessment. In addition to using technology for core instruction, students receive targeted instruction based on the learning needs indicated by computer-based diagnostic assessments such as NWEA, iReady and ST Math. This data is used by teachers to form strategic instructional groups aligned to student learning needs and individualized, on-line learning paths for students. Upper elementary and middle school students are taught how to use technology to support research and to assist in developing solid creative thinking and writing skills. Project-based, multi-disciplinary learning is infused with technology skills and strategies. Additionally, the use of technology by administrative and instructional staff assists school personnel in analyzing student data and continuously monitoring the academic, behavioral and social progress of all students.

**D. Differentiated Curriculum and Instruction:** UPA’s ultimate goal is to provide a learning environment that will maximize the potential for student success. All curriculum used is aligned to Florida Standards. Teachers use differentiated instructional strategies that connect with individual student's learning needs. Teachers manage instructional time to meet the standards while providing motivating, challenging, and meaningful experiences for students to receive and process information in ways that require differentiation of experience. These instructional practices include:

* **Direct Instruction (lecturing/modeling/facilitating):** This methodology is used when teachers need to explain or demonstrate specific content and skills. Explicit, systematic instruction will be based on the Florida Standards. This instruction is structured and based on mastery learning. Frequent curriculum-based assessments help place students in ability groups for further differentiated strategies and allow us to identify students who require additional intervention.
* **Scaffolding:** Teachers identify the current developmental skills of individual students based on assessments and provide support structures to help students move to the next level. As the year moves forward, the students become more adept at skills and at directing their learning-constantly moving toward more autonomous and independent learning.
* **Cooperative Learning:** Teachers guide small-group learning to increase communication and team-building skills. This teaching-learning strategy is based on grouping small teams of students heterogeneously according to interest, background, etc.
* **Information Processing Strategies:** Teaching students "how to" process information is a key factor in teaching students how to strategically organize, store, retrieve, and apply information presented. Such strategies will include memorization, reciprocal teaching, graphic organizing, scaffolding, or webbing.
* **Achieve Program:** This is a comprehensive intervention system designed to provide multi-tiered supports to students who need them. Students will be homogenously grouped for 60 min a day to receive targeted instruction in ELA or Math based on their learning needs. UPA will utilize the following programs:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ELA** | | **Math** | |
| Corrective Reading  iReady | For Level 1 students  For Level 1 and 2 students | ST Math  iReady | For Level 1 students  For Level 1 and 2 students |

* 1. **Student Transition and Readiness**

UPA has initiated efforts to support the transition of Kindergarten students into the school as well as 8th grade students as they matriculate to high school. Included in UPA’s Kindergarten recruitment and retention efforts are:

* Neighborhood Pre-K visits and outreach
* Kindergarten Parent Nights, Open Houses and School Tours
* Kindergarten Step-Up Ceremonies
* On-going parent communication
* Designated breakfast area and outdoor play space exclusively for Kindergarten students

UPA also focuses on middle to high school transition support for graduating 8th grade students through:

* AVID elective classes focused on academic organizational skills, time management skills, study skills
* High school readiness conversations with teachers, administrators and counseling staff
* Visits to prospective high schools
* On-site visits from HS guidance counselors
* 8th grade promotion ceremony

**Part II- Needs Assessment**

Data from multiple sources was reviewed in order to determine the school’s areas of need. Below is a list focused findings from the data review:

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| --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Data** |
| **ELA Overall Achievement** | * 17% of students in grades 3-8 scored proficient or better in ELA |
| **ELA Disaggregated Achievement** | * 55% of 3rd grade students scored a Level 1 in ELA. * 79% of 4th grade students scored a Level 1 in ELA. * 46% of 5th grade students scored a Level 1 in ELA. * 38% of 6th grade students scored a Level 1 in ELA. * 56% of 7th grade students scored a Level 1 in ELA. * 20% of 8th grade students scored a Level 1 in ELA. |
| **Math Overall Achievement** | * 11% of students in grades 3-8 scored proficient or better in Math |
| **Math Disaggregated Achievement** | * 77% of 3rd grade students scored a Level 1 in Math. * 79% of 4th grade students scored a Level 1 in Math. * 80% of 5th grade students scored a Level 1 in Math. * 53% of 6th grade students scored a Level 1 in Math. * 56% of 7th grade students scored a Level 1 in Math. * 36% of 8th grade students scored a Level 1 in Math. |
| **Science Overall Achievement** | * 9% of students in grades 5 and 8 scored proficient or better in Science |
| **Parent Satisfaction** | * 80 % of parents agreed or strongly agreed that they were pleased with their decision to send their child to UPA. |

From these data points the following conclusions were drawn:

* Students are in need of intensive academic supports in ELA and Math including more instructional time and strategic interventions
* Students are in need of a comprehensive science learning experience with curricula that is aligned to Florida NGSSS
* Parents are satisfied when school to family communication is consistent and on-going
* Parents satisfaction will increase as student achievement and learning gains increase

**Part III- Planning and Problem Solving for Implementation**

Based on an intensive review of data and on-going problem-solving discussions by the administrative team and various staff, UPA has developed 4 strategic goals along with corresponding targets and action steps to ensure that each goal is met, thereby addressing the school’s most critical needs within the next school year.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Strategic Goal #1:** Increase student achievement and gains in ELA through the development and implementation of a comprehensive reading instructional program. | | | |
| **Target** | **Indicators** | **Action Steps** | **Persons Responsible** |
| **Increase ELA proficiency from 17% to 27% by June 2015**  **At least 65% of students will demonstrate 1 year of learning gains as measured by the FSA-ELA.**  **At least 90% of students in the lowest 25% will demonstrate 1 year of learning gains in ELA as measured by the FSA-ELA.**  **75% of students will show at least 1 year of grade level growth between pre-and post-assessments (NWEA)** | Students make expected gains on NWEA assessments.  Students successfully complete ELA intervention courses and meet expected targets.  Students will demonstrate mastery on ELA formative assessments.  Students will make expected gains on FAIR and FLCKRS assessments. | * Develop cohesive master schedule organized into 70+ minutes instructional blocks * Schedule and Implement an additional hour of literacy intervention beyond the core classroom instruction * Provide daily common planning time for teachers. * Plan collaboratively to deliver Florida Standards-aligned instruction. * Purchase, train teachers, construct and implement common formative assessments by grade level for ELA * Monitor instruction through weekly walkthroughs and regularly classroom observations. * Train all teachers in high-yield instructional strategies. * Implement AVID strategies in grades 3-8 (AVID Trained Staff) * Target Level 1 and 2 students for Achieve Reading classes (SRA Corrective Reading, iReady) * Identify and schedule Level 1 and/or Level 2 students in Corrective Reading * Execute inclusion model for all ESE students as well as additional pull out instructional time as needed * Administer NWEA ELA assessment 3 times a year and use data track growth, predict FSA performance and to drive instructional decisions and student grouping for instruction * Administer and monitor FAIR assessment to track growth and predict performance on FSA. * Execute regular data meetings to track and monitor progress of students, especially lowest 25%, Level 1s and 2s. * Utilize common writing rubrics and prompts to monitor and assess student performance in writing. | Principal  Assistant Principal  K-8 Administrators  Instructional Staff |
| **Strategic Goal #2:** Increase student achievement and gains in Math through the development and implementation of a comprehensive math instructional program. | | | |
| **Target** | **Indicators** | **Action Steps** | **Persons Responsible** |
| **Increase Math proficiency from 11% to 21% by June 2015**  **At least 65% of students will demonstrate 1 year of learning gains as measured by the FSA-Math.**  **At least 90% of students in the lowest 25% will demonstrate learning gains in Math.**  **75% of students will show at least 1 year of grade level growth between pre-and post-assessments (NWEA)** | Students make expected gains on NWEA assessments.  Students successfully complete Math intervention courses and meet expected targets.  Students will demonstrate mastery on Math formative assessments.  Students will make expected gains on FAIR and FLCKRS assessments. | * Develop cohesive master schedule organized into 80 minute instructional blocks. * Provide daily common planning time for teachers. * Plan collaboratively to deliver Florida Standards-aligned instruction. * Purchase, train teachers, construct and implement common formative assessments by grade level for Math. * Monitor instruction through weekly walkthroughs and regularly classroom observations. * Train all teachers in high-yield instructional strategies. * Implement AVID strategies in grades 3-8 (AVID Trained Staff). * Target Level 1 and 2 students for Achieve Reading classes (iReady, ST Math) * Identify and schedule Level 1 and 2 students in ST Math, iREady. * Execute inclusion model for all ESE students as well as additional pull out instructional time as needed * Administer NWEA Math assessment 3 times a year and use data track growth, predict FSA performance and to drive instructional decisions and student grouping for instruction * Administer and monitor FAIR assessment to track growth and predict performance on FSA. * Execute regular data meetings to track and monitor progress of students, especially lowest 25%, Level 1s and 2s. * Utilize common writing rubrics and prompts to monitor and assess student performance in writing. | Principal  Assistant Principal  K-8 Administrators  Instructional Staff |
| **Strategic Goal #3:** Increase student achievement and gains in Science through the development and implementation of a comprehensive science instructional program. | | | |
| **Target** | **Indicators** | **Action Steps** | **Persons Responsible** |
| **Increase Science proficiency from 9% to 19% by June 2015** | Students will demonstrate mastery on school-created Science assessments. | * Develop cohesive master schedule organized into 80 minute instructional blocks * Departmentalize science instruction for 5th and 8th grades. * Purchase and implement a coherent, standards-aligned core Science curriculum in grades 5 and 8. * Provide daily common planning time for teachers * Monitor instruction through weekly walkthroughs and regularly classroom observations * Implement AVID strategies in grades 3-8 (AVID Trained Staff) * Train 5th and 8th science teachers in high-yield literacy instructional strategies. | Principal  Assistant Principal  K-8 Administrators  Instructional Staff |
| **Strategic Goal #4:** Increase parental satisfaction through the continuation and improvement of the parental involvement initiative. | | | |
| **Target** | **Indicators** | **Action Steps** | **Persons Responsible** |
| **Increase parental satisfaction from 80% to 90% by June 2015** | At least 90% of parents will agree or strongly agree that they are pleased with their decision to send their child(ren) to UPA. | * Conduct quarterly parent meetings to share relevant info and get parent input (including Title I meeting) * Send out weekly recorded calls to inform parents of upcoming dates and school events * Conduct Parent Open Houses and Family Nights * Execute teacher-parent phone calls and meetings (both formal and informal) * Send out monthly written communication from school to family * Update school website * Conduct Teacher-parent-student conferences at least twice a year * Distribute mid quarter progress reports and end of quarter grades * Implement Parent volunteer program | Principal  Assistant Principal  K-8 Administrators  Instructional Staff |