

**U.S. Department of Education**  
**2017 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program**

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [ ] Title I [ ] Charter [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Carl Brown

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Manatee Elementary School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 3425 Viera Boulevard

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Viera State FL Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 32940-8000

County Brevard County

Telephone (321) 433-0050 Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Web site/URL http://www.edline.net/pages/Manatee\_Elementary E-mail brown.carl@brevardschools.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\*Dr. Desmond Blackburn E-mail blackburn.desmond@brevardschools.org  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) \_\_\_\_\_

District Name Brevard Public School District Tel. (321) 633-1000

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board  
President/Chairperson Mrs. Misty Belford  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

## **Part I – Eligibility Certification**

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The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group and all subgroups, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
3. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2017 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2011 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, or 2016.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.
9. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
10. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
11. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
12. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2016-2017) unless otherwise stated.

### DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 55 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 11 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 16 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 82 TOTAL

### SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
  - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
  - Suburban
  - Small city or town in a rural area
  - Rural
3. Number of students as of October 1, 2016 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
<b>PreK</b>	5	5	10
<b>K</b>	72	50	122
<b>1</b>	61	69	130
<b>2</b>	61	58	119
<b>3</b>	63	57	120
<b>4</b>	66	66	132
<b>5</b>	46	69	115
<b>6</b>	50	57	107
<b>7</b>	0	0	0
<b>8</b>	0	0	0
<b>9</b>	0	0	0
<b>10</b>	0	0	0
<b>11</b>	0	0	0
<b>12 or higher</b>	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	424	431	855

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 3 % Asian
  - 4 % Black or African American
  - 8 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 1 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 73 % White
  - 10 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2015 – 2016 school year: 10%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	40
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2015 until the end of the 2015-2016 school year	46
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	86
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2015	839
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.103
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	10

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 3 %  
30 Total number ELL

Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):  
Amharic, Chinese, Zhongwen, Portuguese, Spanish

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 15 %  
Total number students who qualify: 130

8. Students receiving special education services: 18 %  
155 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <u>12</u> Autism               | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness              | <u>12</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness        | <u>19</u> Specific Learning Disability         |
| <u>1</u> Emotional Disturbance | <u>64</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment    | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</u> Mental Retardation    | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities | <u>1</u> Developmentally Delayed               |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 14
10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects	46
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	13
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a licensed professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	5
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	5

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 19:1
12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014	2012-2013	2011-2012
Daily student attendance	96%	96%	97%	97%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**  
Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2016.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.  
Yes  No
- If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

The Manatee Elementary School community will design quality learning experiences, fostering an environment of high academic and character standards.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

## **PART III – SUMMARY**

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Manatee Elementary is located in the heart of Brevard County, in a town called Viera, less than an hour away from the famed Orlando theme parks and 15 minutes from some of the state’s best beaches. The newest master planned community on Florida’s Space Coast, Viera was envisioned 27 years ago as a central hub to unite our 72-mile long county. Today, it is a common meeting place for shopping, recreation, and government, and boasts some of the highest performing K-12 schools in the state.

Viera has seen tremendous population growth in recent years as many of the world’s largest aviation, aerospace, and defense companies have moved to Brevard to take advantage of the enormous engineering talent that grew with the space program. Families who relocate here choose Viera for our top-rated schools and strong sense of community.

Three public elementary schools span the eight-mile area that makes up Viera. Manatee is centrally-located with the majority of families residing in Viera, but also in neighboring Rockledge. The vast majority of our 880 students either walk, bike, or are driven to school -- on golf carts -- but it was not always that way. When Manatee opened its doors in 2003, the land around our school was undeveloped. Our first students came from two nearby feeder elementary schools and all traveled by bus. Understanding the disconnect that those families would likely feel attending an out-of-area school, Manatee was conceived as a “campus for the community” – where families would feel an instant sense of belonging. This premise has been a binding principle for our school since day one and is a story visually told in the tiny, concrete-cast handprints of Manatee’s first students that surround the façade of our building and are a daily reminder of how our school came to be and the unique position we hold in the community.

Manatee has earned the distinction of being an “A” school in the state of Florida every year since opening. This past year, Governor Rick Scott recognized Manatee as 14th in the state (out of 1,838 schools) based on our Florida Standards Assessments (FSA) scores in both English language arts and mathematics. Manatee has earned numerous state and national recognitions over the years, most recently earning the Power-Library Schools Award in 2013 and again in 2016, the Excellence in Physical Education Award (EPEA) in 2013 and again in 2016, and the Florida Arts Model School Award in 2016. Manatee was also recognized as a Statewide Music Demonstration School, National Professional Learning Community School, and as a nationally-recognized Green Ribbon School in 2015. In addition, we have received the Golden School Award for 14 consecutive years as a result of our outstanding parent volunteer program.

What Manatee may lack in history, we make up for in traditions that are distinctly our own -- from the eight-foot-tall sand sculpture located in our lobby that greets students, staff, and visitors which is re-envisioned year after year by an award-winning local sculpting team, to the equally giant school Constitution that hangs in our lobby as a symbol of everything we strive for and the values we uphold. Our annual Dr. Seuss Week at Manatee is a celebration of the iconic author and National Read Across America Day, and extends over a week-long schedule of themed activities and events culminating in a community 5K race that draws more than 600 participants from throughout Brevard County and beyond.

Also unique to Manatee is our 5th Grade camping trip that occurs every spring when students travel to Camp LaNoChe, located in the Ocala National Forest, approximately two hours northwest of Viera. For three days and two nights, students immerse themselves in hands-on, fun-filled science exploration with their peers, teachers, and chaperones selected from our two local high schools (often Manatee alumni). Both our principal and assistant principal attend camp as well. For many students, this annual Manatee rite of passage marks the first time they have been away from home.

We are extremely fortunate to have an active and collaborative Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) which manages our volunteer program and whose members have been instrumental in the creating and delivering high quality enrichment programs that are foundational to our school -- from our “Partners in Education” program that fosters strong and meaningful ties with local businesses, to our “HEROs” kindness and anti-bullying project, to Green initiatives, which put a more focused effort on recycling in our school and neighborhoods. We take great pride in our “Manatee Gives Back” community outreach program and the

activities PTO organizes throughout the year to show our support for those in need both within and beyond our boundaries.

These are just a few of the achievements we hold dear, as they demonstrate our commitment of providing high quality learning experiences and fostering an environment of high academic and character standards. They validate our belief that students will meet the challenges of the future when provided with a supportive and well-rounded learning environment that serves to teach, enrich, and inspire.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum:**

Manatee works to provide optimum learning for all of our K-6 and our 12 Pre-K speech and OT “drive-in” students. We teach standards that provide a continuum to ensure we are building on foundational skills for students to be successful throughout their future academic journey. Though school days are structured with time allotted for each subject area, teachers strive to seize each opportunity for integration of standards in order to maximize student achievement. Teachers follow district-provided pacing guides to create and display thought-provoking essential questions for lessons which are directly related to standards-based instruction. Essential questions promote class discussions, further supporting engagement in the learning process, as well as help students recognize their learning goals for lessons. Teachers utilize varied resources to promote student engagement and help develop a deep understanding of content, while ensuring that the rigor of the standards is met. Through the efforts of our faculty, Manatee was the first school to be the two-time recipient of the Digital Classroom Plan Grant. Students have access to computers, iPads, ChromeBooks and 3-D printers to promote 21st century learning. Our School Improvement Plan focuses on incorporating STEM lessons to ensure students are properly prepared for the future. Manatee is dedicated to helping each student develop into a lifelong learner and contributing citizen to society.

Our preschool program provides speech, language and occupational therapy to 3-5 year old students. These services directly support success in core curriculum standards of Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) Program. Therapy goals are created according to individual student needs to maximize student preparedness for the K-3 standards that they might otherwise have difficulty with, effectively closing gaps in student achievement due to disabilities. All of our preschool students achieved passing scores on the state required Battelle Developmental Inventory-2, a test used to measure child outcomes of preschool education programs, and are being promoted to general education classrooms.

Reading/English Language Arts is a foundation for learning throughout each school day. Every classroom provides 90 minutes of uninterrupted reading instruction. Students are exposed to complex fiction and nonfiction texts to provide opportunities for maximum growth. The ELA shifts are evident in Manatee classrooms: students practicing with complex text and its academic language; reading, speaking and writing grounded in text evidence, and the intentional building of knowledge through content-rich non-fiction. Novel studies, DBQs (Document Based Questions), Exit Slips, NewsEla articles, and Scholastic News are resources that help address ELA standard clusters.

Writing is an integral part of students' literacy development. Instruction starts with building foundational skills to develop coherent writing for a variety of purposes (narrative, informative, and opinion). Students use writing as another method of communicating their thoughts across content areas, providing teachers with insight into their level of understanding in formative and summative assessments. Incorporating text evidence is a key component to helping students develop the necessary skills to analyze and justify responses and opinions. Manatee celebrates students' growth in writing through the Writing Wall of Fame, Writing Oscars, and Discovering Quality Literature programs.

Communication in mathematics is essential to understanding mathematical processes and vocabulary. Math instruction at Manatee is focused on understanding these processes, emphasizing problem solving skills applicable to real-world situations. Students are taught multiple strategies to solve problems and communicate their thinking effectively, which provides the teacher insight to students' acquisition of standards. Some ways that teachers verify learning is through Number Talks, small group instruction, performance tasks, and writing to explain their problem-solving techniques. Teachers supplement the Pearson enVision curriculum with school-funded programs such as Math Seeds and TenMarks to ensure that students are mastering the rigorous standards.

Inquiry-based instruction is an integral part of Science at Manatee, in addition to using the National Geographic adopted curriculum. Science standards are taught through interactive notebooking, hands-on labs, STEM activities, probes, and engaging weekly lessons in our Science Lab through the activity wheel.

Field trips, to such places as the Enchanted Forest Nature Preserve, Indian River Lagoon, Kennedy Space Center, Camp LaNoChe, and the Planetarium, provide learning opportunities to foster a connection between classrooms and the real world.

Socratic seminars and DBQs are fundamental components to our Social Studies curriculum, as they provide students with exposure to the content and reinforce the communication skills that are essential for productive citizens. Teachers use active learning and Social Studies Interacts to make curriculum come alive and give students ownership of the concepts they are studying. Social Studies instruction is supplemented continuously with real-world experiences and opportunities for community involvement. Each year, Manatee teams with Brevard County Board of Elections to provide students the opportunity to cast an actual ballot for their favorite Sunshine State Book. During 4th Grade Business Involvement Day, local business leaders serve as guest teachers and engage students in hands-on learning activities designed to teach economic principles. Manatee 1st and 3rd graders learn valuable money management skills during their Entrepreneur and Market Days. Year-round community outreach programs instill civic-mindedness and encourage a spirit of giving.

At Manatee, instruction is standards-driven and teachers work diligently to embed a variety of content standards whenever possible. Each day is considered an opportunity to help students reach their maximum academic potential and work towards becoming a contributing member of society through civic learning opportunities. We strive to develop lifelong learners who will be empowered to take responsibility for their learning every day.

## **2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

Students at Manatee follow a daily activity wheel schedule which includes Art, Media, Music, Physical Education (P.E.), and Science Lab. Each day they participate in a different activity for 40 minutes. The five teachers who run these departments truly support the learning occurring in the classrooms. They work collaboratively to provide and ensure unique experiences of high quality for all students including the use of various technologies embedded throughout their curriculum.

Students receive high quality instruction on all P.E. standards. Our P.E. teacher incorporates a variety of activities that keep students engaged and moving, while addressing nutrition and health standards on a daily basis. She established our Morning Mile program, organizes our annual Family Wellness Night, National Walk to School Day, and Pedestrian and Bike Safety program. Her dedication resulted in Manatee receiving the Excellence in Physical Education Award in consecutive award cycles.

Our Music teacher knows how to bring students out of their comfort zone in regards to musical talent. Students in Music are exposed to a variety of genres and instruments ranging from ORFF to strings. Grade level performances are held during the school year for Manatee families and friends. We have a music committee consisting of teachers and parent volunteers. Some of the activities they organize include our annual talent show and Summer Music Camp open to all students. They also assist with our end of year musicals which have included Seussical and Willy Wonka. As a result of our musical programs and efforts, Manatee has been recognized as Statewide Music Demonstration School.

We believe that having Science Lab on our activity wheel has markedly improved our scores on the Statewide Science Assessment. Based on the most recent FCAT scores, Manatee is the #1 ranked (non-choice) elementary school in Brevard County. Our Science Lab teacher has a wealth of knowledge of science standards and is a National Board Certified educator. She scaffolds instruction and supports the standards being taught in the classrooms. Science Fair at Manatee is an academic tradition. Every student in grades 3-6 grade is responsible for completing a science fair project. Science professionals and engineers from the leading aerospace firms are then invited to judge the Science Fair and each student has a face-to-face interview with an adult about their project. This truly reflects their ability to apply what they've learned. Finally, Florida Institute of Technology students partner with Manatee for reverse engineering design challenges throughout the year.

Our Media Center has evolved from the traditional quiet library setting to a vibrant and hands-on innovation

center where creative exploration is encouraged through the use of literature and technology. Stationary furniture has made way for maker spaces where students can collaborate and create, utilizing advanced learning technologies such as Lego Story Starter, robots for coding, and littleBits for circuit design challenges. iPads are used to conduct cutting edge research and build presentations using a variety of apps. Our Media Specialist shares her love of reading through our most treasured programs and events -- from Kindergarten Campfire Night, where our littlest Manatees learn how to check out a book, and our 2nd Grade Chapter Book Challenge, to Book Bash for grades 3-6 and our popular STEM Club offered to grades 5-6. There are school-wide reading challenges and our much anticipated Hour of Code and Seuss Week activities. Manatee's Media program has received the Florida Power-Library Schools Award two years in a row.

In Art, all lessons are grade level specific and are aligned with the state standards. Students work with a variety of media to develop their skills of creative problem solving, artistic perception, and expression. Lessons are collaboratively planned to cover many aspects of art education including art vocabulary, art expression and communication, and an understanding of the role of the arts throughout history. Our art program attempts to find the artist that lies within each child and build awareness of self-expression through imaginative and inventive lessons. Our art teacher goes beyond the art standards and puts an emphasis on students being able to articulate about their artwork. Furthermore, she utilizes a computer program called Artsonia. This is an online art gallery for each student to showcase their artwork around the world. Each student has their own secure portfolio that parents can access. As a result, Manatee was recently awarded the Florida Arts Model School Award.

### **3. Instructional Methods, Interventions, and Assessments:**

Manatee's administration and teachers strongly emphasize the importance of early intervention and differentiating instruction to fit the needs of all individual learners. It is our belief that all students, regardless of exceptionalities or learning styles, require interventions and differentiation of instruction to meet all students at their individual level. As a part of our whole school model, students receive small group and/or individualized interventions to reach their full potential.

Teachers are responsible for providing ongoing formative and summative assessments to determine the level of need for each student in their classroom. Through progress monitoring and data collection processes teachers determine each student's individual needs and ensure personal academic growth leading to a higher level of achievement.

A variety of assessment tools is used within each grade level focusing on assessing student growth and level of mastery. Tier 1 Universal Diagnostic Assessments are used to identify students' level of academic need and to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses. From there, we determine a plan to support individual skill deficits through Tier 2 or Tier 3 interventions designed to close learning gaps and transfer to grade level content. Manatee utilizes programs and assessments that have multiple components and seamless connection to scaffolding instruction, resulting in a variety of data reports available to our teachers.

A leadership team facilitates a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS). Members of the team include administration, guidance counselors, ESE teachers, general education teachers (K-6), literacy coach, district support specialists, school psychologist, occupational therapist, speech/language pathologist, and behavior analyst (as needed).

MTSS meetings are held bi-monthly with the focus on student data. General education teachers are tasked with providing current performance data and to bring forth concerns, as the team looks at the whole child. The MTSS leadership team analyzes student data to make determinations on individual student needs.

When analyzing Manatee's Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) data in relation to overall test scores and those of subgroups, 3 out of 4 subgroups scored within 10 percent of our school average. On the English Language Arts Assessment there was an achievement gap of 19 percent among African American students compared to the test scores of all students. For the Math Assessment, there was an achievement gap of 14 percent among African American students and the average test scores of all students. Through the MTSS

process these students have been identified and currently receive interventions in tiered groups and progress monitoring to ensure growth. The Statewide Science Assessment scores show no gap between the test scores of all students and the test scores of any subgroups.

All students are placed into tiers, based on their level of academic mastery. Tier 1 students who have shown adequate growth and are on/above grade level expectations are placed into groups to receive further enrichment opportunities. Students who show a need for supplemental supports are placed into skill specific interventions that will provide the opportunity for growth, while interventions at the Tier 3 level provide the most intensive level of supports to close the achievement gap.

In order to maintain our high achievement level, we must continuously challenge our school community. More than 10 percent of our student population has qualified for our Gifted Student Program (GSP), as categorized by the State of Florida. We offer gifted instruction based on a blended learning environment. Students who participate in GSP are immersed in Socratic discussions, independent research projects, and high-level critical thinking skills.

GSP students benefit from curriculum fostering high-level skills of self-awareness. They discover textual evidence within Sean Covey's *The 7 Habits of Happy Kids* to define being proactive, beginning with the end in mind, and putting first things first. In preparation for middle school, students in grade 6 collaborate to create a Google slide presentation of Covey's *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens* inclusive of paradigms/principals, thinking win-win, and comfort versus courage zone. Concepts from *The 7 Habits* are applicable to stretching and growing high performing students, both academically and personally.

Additionally, GSP students delve deeper into language standards by researching high-level vocabulary words and analyzing high-level analogies. They are exposed to hundreds of idiomatic expressions and think deeply about thought provoking quotes by famous leaders. With an eye on their futures, they have participated in Q&A opportunities with career guest speakers in the fields of chemical, mechanical, and environmental engineering.

## PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

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### **1. School Climate/Culture:**

From the moment you walk onto our campus, you can feel an energy that is not easily replicated. On any given day, starting as early as 7:30 A.M., you will find our principal and assistant principal outside the front of the school greeting students and parents (by name) as they come through the crosswalk. Students taking part in our Morning Mile program are running on our outdoor track. Shortly after the bell rings, you can hear our grade 6 Manny TV News team giving a live broadcast of daily announcements. As the day progresses, our lobby is filled with family members having lunch with their children. After school, students, teachers and parent volunteers can be seen tending the gardens in our outdoor learning classroom, coding robots in STEM club, running the neighborhoods as part of cross country, or rehearsing for the end of year performance. This is an average day at our not-so-average school.

To help make the transition back to school an easy one, teachers and staff enjoy a variety of pre-planning activities including a back to school barbecue hosted by our principal and a faculty team-building activity which, in years past, has included Smash Golf, a group painting class, and scavenger hunt around town. Throughout the year, teachers are recognized for their efforts with handwritten notes of encouragement. There are complimentary team lunches during the holidays and testing season, and at the end of each school year our PTO and volunteers organize an incredible week-long celebration of our teachers and staff with uniquely-themed activities.

For students, the year begins with an Ice Cream Social served up by their teachers as part of our annual Open House. Students in grades K-2 are treated to a visit from Zero the Hero to celebrate the 100th day of school. Students in grades 3-6 are given pep talks, pencils with motivational sayings, and peppermints to keep them positive and alert during the rigors of FSA testing. Our Writing Wall of Fame and Young Author Oscars encourage and celebrate writing excellence. Throughout the year, quarterly grade-level awards ceremonies recognize academic achievement and good character. There are opportunities for students to get “caught in the act...” of making good choices or to earn the chance to be a teacher assistant for the day or have lunch with the principal.

Manatee’s administrative team strongly believes that a healthy balance of academics and fun is paramount to keeping our teachers and students motivated and excited about coming to school each day. The feeling of togetherness and positivity is always kept at the forefront of everything we plan.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

Our families are the glue that binds our school. Without their participation, many of the programs and activities that uniquely define Manatee would cease to exist. Our administration and PTO work hard to foster lasting relationships with as many parents as we can, getting to know them not only by name, but by their interests, experience and availability, so we can make their time at Manatee worthwhile and enlist their support in ways that speak directly to them.

So many of our family members have an impressive range of professional experience and contacts that they have generously brought to bear on some of our largest school undertakings -- from the design and construction of our track and beautification of our grounds, to the installation of a high-end sound system, to the creation of our annual 5K race.

Our parents have been instrumental in providing the leadership, resources, and connections to help us improve our school and make a difference in our community. They serve on our School Advisory Council providing input on the school budget and expenditures and various curriculum initiatives. They assist in the writing of grants and awards submissions, and have been the driving force in the creation of our “Manatee Gives Back” program that raises awareness and support for those less fortunate, as well as our “Partners in Education” business outreach program which helps fund school improvements, reward academic achievement, and recognize the work of Manatee teachers and staff.

Approximately 60 percent of our more than 500 families volunteer at Manatee, in addition to alumni and members of the community. Last year, our volunteers logged more than 15,000 hours serving as class “Room Parents;” chaperoning field trips; shelving books in our Media Center; running concessions at family events; and assisting with Walkathon, Field Day, and other grade-level activities.

We strive to provide our families a way to feel connected to our school, even if they cannot put the hours in to volunteer. There are monthly PTO meetings and spirit nights, concerts and curriculum nights. We host numerous events throughout the year including our annual Ice Cream Social/Open House, Kindergarten Thanksgiving feast and Harvest Hoedown, Talent Show, our 5K and annual faculty softball game – all much anticipated and well attended by our Manatee families.

With a school as large and busy as ours, getting information out early and often is key. Families receive grades and other academic information via Edline, our District's online gradebook, teacher newsletters, and one-on-one conferences. Annually, 95-100 percent of our families engage in parent-teacher conferences. Our Manatee PTO Facebook page is followed by our families, businesses, and community members, and is a model for other schools. We use the Peachjar app to dispense our bi-weekly school newsletter any business/community related flyers and phone messages for a more personal touch.

### **3. Professional Development:**

Understanding the importance of continuous professional development, Manatee takes a systematic approach. We value taking the time to delve deep into the strategies of a new program and incorporate new learning into every classroom. In concert with our School Improvement Plan, we remain committed to an initiative for several years through our master professional development plan. To ensure continuity, throughout the year, we also revisit former initiatives that have now become part of our school culture.

Technology professional development is led by our technology committee which has representation from every grade level. The efforts of this committee resulted in Manatee being awarded the Digital Classroom Plan Grant in two consecutive cycles resulting in the addition of 600 student laptop computers. These technology leaders also participate in leading district-level trainings and share new strategies and best practices in staff trainings throughout the year.

Manatee teachers have represented our school and professional development initiatives at state conferences. Our PE teacher and assistant principal have presented at SHAPE, our state PE conference, sharing Manatee’s best practices with educators from all over the state of Florida.

Manatee teachers traveled to Tennessee to attend the National Science Teacher Conference. Upon returning, they created a multi-year STEM initiative plan tied to the science standards, which included professional development, parent involvement, and after school clubs. They were able to share current trends in science education and engage teachers in real world examples of quality lessons that have had a significant impact on how we teach science at Manatee and on student achievement outcomes. In addition, three of our Manatee educators were selected to attend the prestigious Phil Mickelson ExxonMobil Teacher Academy.

We have monthly professional development meetings which are centered around our school improvement focus of technology and STEM. These meetings have included breakout sessions facilitated by our staff to share creative ways to integrate all subjects and share samples of model student work. Collaboration is the cornerstone of these meetings where teachers engage authentic conversation in school initiatives.

We have an active relationship with the district technology integrators and district resource teachers who help support us in whole group, small group, and individual professional development using the programs such as Google Classroom, Kahoot, Green Screen filming, and Padlet.

Our school approach to professional development or new initiatives is to create small groups of eager adopters then strategically plan incremental checkpoints to integrate the remainder of the staff. Professional

development focused on building teacher capacity is job-embedded; teachers analyze data and develop professional growth plans that are implemented and monitored throughout the year as to their impact on student achievement.

#### **4. School Leadership:**

Manatee's administrative team consists of a principal, assistant principal, and teacher on assignment. Combined, they draw from more than 25 years of administrative background and experience. The administrators' primary role is to support teachers and assist with building their proficiency. All decisions related to policies, programs, and resources are made in the best interests of students. In a profession that has seen increased disillusion and disengagement, our school leaders wholeheartedly believe in establishing a collaborative environment where teachers and students can thrive. The leadership philosophies of the administrative team center on making the workplace an enjoyable atmosphere for all our employees.

Multiple times each month, the administrative team meets with grade levels to discuss student data and ensure that the Data Team policies and procedures are being implemented with fidelity. Additional meetings are held with parents and district resource staff to create interventions and monitor the progress of struggling students. Administrators also use classroom walkthrough time to be visible to students and teachers each day. Walkthroughs are followed up with handwritten notes of encouragements and personal feedback.

We believe a true shared leadership environment provides teachers the opportunity to have ownership of the enrichments that define our school. This commitment begins as early as the interview process when the outside interests of prospective teachers are explored. In their first year at Manatee, teachers are expected to participate actively in school programs. Then, in their second year and beyond, they're expected to assume a leadership role. Administrators annually meet with teachers to identify a committee or afterschool club that matches their interests with the needs of our school community. Manatee can offer more than 60 in-school committees, after-school clubs, and initiatives that reinforce student achievement, ranging from academics to athletics and community service. By embracing this philosophy, student achievement can be nurtured through avenues over and above traditional classroom instruction.

Manatee also offers aspiring administrators the opportunity to experience and develop their leadership skills. By allowing teachers to share in leadership experiences such as creating the master school calendar, school scheduling, filling out personnel allocation reports, or handling discipline, teachers gain a multitude of experiences in preparation to move into an administrative role. Currently, four former Manatee teachers are serving as administrators at Brevard Public Schools and one is a district-level administrator serving in the superintendent's cabinet. The leadership team at Manatee Elementary has created a culture where teachers excel; for example, over the 14-year history of the school fewer than five teachers have left Manatee to transfer laterally to other schools.

## **Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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At Manatee, we take a “whole child” approach to the educational process. We believe this not only makes our students better prepared academically, but more emotionally mature and civic-minded when they progress on to middle school. Our collaborative relationship with the PTO and strong ties to the Brevard community provide us with the resources and latitude to create meaningful social-emotional programs that, we hope, have a deep and lasting impact on our students.

“Manatee Gives Back” is our school-wide community outreach program which aims to connect our families with the needs of our community and instill a greater sense of awareness, compassion, and purpose in our students. These are important life skills that, unfortunately, too often cannot be taught in the classroom given today’s demanding academic schedules.

Our administration and PTO organize various charitable projects throughout the year in support of our school families in need and various local charities and non-profits. Our guidance counselor maintains a list of deserving Manatee families and works closely with members of our PTO to coordinate response efforts. Each year, PTO donates more than \$1,000 in school supplies, organizes Thanksgiving dinners and holiday gift giving, and covers the costs associated with field trips, Camp LaNoChe, and other grade-level activities.

Manatee organizes a fall food drive and runs our own “Souper Bowl” food collection each January, where our families donate thousands of non-perishable foods to benefit Central Brevard Second Harvest Food Bank. We collect thousands of pop tabs on behalf of the Ronald McDonald House. We organize book drives for local school libraries in need. There are student dress up days to raise funds for organizations such as the Go Pink for breast cancer campaigns, Relay for Life, and Alex’s Lemonade Stand. We hold an annual coat drive and end of year backpack and shoe collection to benefit the Brevard County local charities.

During the holidays, our PTO decks our halls with messages of kindness. Through our annual “Thanks-for-Giving” holiday outreach campaign, Manatee students “adopt” three local charities to support with in-kind donations. Over the last three years, families have collected pet food and supplies for the Central Brevard Humane Society, fulfilled children’s holiday wish lists for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren of Brevard, created birthday boxes for neglected children in the Nana’s House program, created care packages for active duty soldiers, and collected over \$2,300 in loose change to support families in transition through Family Promise of Brevard.

Students learn the true definition of giving through acts of kindness and being in the service of others. We are extremely proud of the extraordinary involvement and generosity of our families with each and every project we undertake with Manatee Gives Back