

## **TRIUMPH GULF COAST, INC. PRE-APPLICATION FORM**

Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. ("Triumph Gulf Coast") has created a pre-application process to provide initial consideration of potential ideas for projects or programs that may seek an award of funding. Applicants are required to participate in the pre-application process. Notwithstanding the response from Triumph Gulf Coast on the pre-application form, an Applicant may still elect to submit an Application.

### **APPLICANT INFORMATION:**

Name of Individual/Entity/Organization: Bay District Schools

Brief Description of Background of Individual/Entity/Organization: Bay County Schools, governed by an elected five-member board, responsible for setting school policies which are designed with the goal of delivering the best possible education to each child. Bay District Schools is led by Superintendent William V. Husfelt, III. The district is comprised of 47 schools: 5 high schools, 6 middle schools, 2 combined grade level schools (K-8, K-12), 3 special purpose schools, 1 adult technical school, 10 charter schools and 1 virtual school. The entire school system has a total membership of 27,784 students from Pre-K to 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

#### Contact Information:

Primary Contact Information: William V. Husfelt, III  
Title: Superintendent  
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Names of co-applicants, partners or other entities, organizations that will have a role in the proposed project or program: Gulf Coast State College, Florida State University- Panama City, Bay Education Foundation, GKN, Eastern Shipbuilding, Gulf Power, Bay County Chamber of Commerce, Bay Economic Development Alliance, Career Source Gulf Coast

### **REQUIRED EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

In a maximum of three (3) pages, please describe the proposed project or program, including (i) the amount of funds being sought from Triumph Gulf Coast; (ii) the amount and identity of other sources of funds for the proposed project or program; (iii) the location of the project or program; (iv) summary description of the proposed program, including how the program will be transformational and promote economic recovery, diversification, and enhancement of the disproportionately affected counties, and (v) a summary timeline for the proposed project or program.

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

This pre-application process will **not** result in an award of funding by Triumph Gulf Coast. Rather, this process is designed to facilitate submission of ideas for potential projects or programs before the Applicant expends time and/or resources to complete a full Application. All Applicants for funding are required to complete an Application, which will be scored, and then considered for award in the discretion of Triumph Gulf Coast Board.

# **BAY DISTRICT SCHOOLS TRIUMPH PRE-K ACADEMY**

## **Executive Summary**

There is no other form of transformative change that is as critical than providing quality early childhood education to all children in the region. The sustainability of a healthy, thriving community begins with the educational opportunities set forth from the beginning stages of life that can ultimately dictate the economic future and quality of life one will lead. Bay District Schools, with its educational partners, is determined to do its part to change the fate of many young people by applying a cradle-to-career approach in addressing the educational gaps that will feed into the regions workforce pipeline. This mission is aligned with the goals outlined in the Northwest Florida Forward report, *A Regional Strategy for Economic Transformation* emphasizing the need to invest in Talent, Infrastructure, and Quality of Place to create transformational change in the Northwest Florida region as well as Bay County's priority to invest in cradle-to-career education. The proposed project is an exemplary Pre-Kindergarten Academy that centralizes Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK)/Exceptional Student Education (ESE) programs serving Bay District students.

The Triumph Academy would be a safe, holistic, educational place that applies innovative approaches for advanced foundational learning in early childhood development and STEM concepts; expands the opportunities for families to work during the day; and provides wrap around services to the most disadvantaged families in the county. The curriculum will use technology as a tool for education and would level the playing field for students who primarily come from challenging socioeconomic conditions. The curriculum will not only develop fine-motor skills, reading readiness, verbal skills and overall confidence of oneself, participants will engage in exciting STEM activities that sets the stage for a pathway toward a bright future. The facility itself is planned to be a 50,000 square foot facility designed with Preschoolers in mind. The structure will include 30 classrooms, a cafeteria, gym, a PE pavilion, and office space that accommodates staff and wrap around services.

The Triumph Academy will offer a full-day program that extends developmental stimulation for children ages 3-4 who are the in the most need. These children live in diverse communities in which poverty, drug abuse, and single-caregiver homes are the norm. In 2016-2017, Bay District school data indicates that there were over 1500 Pre-K aged children in Bay County eligible for VPK/ESE however 26% of the students either dropped out or were never enrolled. To ensure that students take advantage of this program, transportation will be provided daily by Bay District schools. This extended day program will assist families who struggle to afford care beyond the free three-hour day allowing caregivers the time to improve themselves by going to work or school. Due to the centralized approach of the Pre-K Academy, children and families will be able to receive leveraged wrap around services that include social work, parenting activities, counseling, and referrals to other services that can improve their quality of life.

In addition, there will be many opportunities to elevate the level of best practice models implemented by the collective cohort of teachers. Such initiatives will be delivered school-wide, while embedding training to meet vertical and horizontal alignment of standards with more depth and fidelity. The program can be a model for change not only for the region but for the entire country.

**i. Amount of funds being sought from Triumph Gulf Coast**

Bay District Schools requests a total of \$10,000,000 for the complete construction of the project.

**ii. The amount and identity of other sources of funds for the proposed project or program.**

**Bay District Schools** will provide in-kind contributions close to \$2,000,000. Planned contributions include \$749, 000 for full-time Administrative (2) and instructional personnel (9); \$117,000 for wrap around services (Social Worker, Parent Liaison and Nurse), and 1,000,000 for transportation. Other in-kind contributions include property, equipment and fees for planned construction.

**State funding** contribution is projected to be \$587,560 annually (at an estimated 250 students). \$2350.24 per student is provided by the state for 540 hours of instruction. This number is expected to grow annually and will be dependent upon facility capacity.

**iii. The location of the project or program**

If funded, the location of the project will be in Panama City, central to many area focus schools that have been identified as having a significant number of disadvantaged students.

**iv. Summary description of the proposed program, including how the program will be transformational and promote economic recovery, diversification, and enhancement of the disproportionately affected counties, and a summary timeline for the proposed project or program.**

This project would be the most transformational as it addresses the root of the problem and invests in a cohort of diverse students from the cradle. The project considers the overall priorities of both the Triumph Fund and Bay County by leveraging current Bay District school resources to develop infrastructure for cradle-to-career education and improves the areas that are in dire need of economic recovery. In the long-term, all current and future industry sectors will benefit because students that participate in this program will be given a fair chance to start their educational journey with the confidence and knowledge needed to break out of a cycle of poverty and a drug ridden community. These students will be prime candidates for entering elementary school programs that offer STEM education and career academies that will shepherd them toward the region's workforce pipeline ultimately improving the socioeconomic conditions throughout the county.

The future of the economy in Northwest Florida will be dependent upon the available workforce that are educated in STEM related subjects and trained through Career and Technical

Education initiatives. However, most of the disadvantaged population in Bay County are already academically behind before entering Kindergarten. According to a U.S. Dept. of Education report, *A Matter of Equity in America*, studies indicate that participating in quality early learning can advance educational attainment and earnings later in life. The impact is even more substantial from low-income families and those at risk for academic failure who, on average, start kindergarten 12 to 14 months behind their peers in pre-literacy and language skills.

Providing a high-quality Pre-K Academy accessible to communities most in need, would be the start in improving the quality of place for all residents in Bay County. According to the *Florida Forward County Snapshot*, the report reveals that in 2014, 14.75% of the total population in Bay County live below the poverty level, slightly lower than the region's (15.8%) and the national (15.6%) population living in poverty. The situation is compounded further by the prevalent drug use in Panama City. According to a recent study by Castlight Health, Panama City ranks as the third worst area for opioid abusers in the nation. Young preschool aged children from these areas have so many cards stacked against them, therefore it is almost impossible for them to breakout of the cycle of drugs and poverty. The Triumph Academy will give participating students a fighting chance to start off their educational journey toward a sustained career pathway.

The Triumph Academy will develop academic excellence that will close the educational achievement gap that has continuously stifled the county's economic future. The project would result in transformative change in the lives of the residents that have been most affected by economic scarcity in Bay County. While this investment may take time, it is a needed foundation in developing a diverse workforce pipeline for the next generation.

#### **v. Timeline**

If funded, site development, campus design and construction is estimated to take 24 months to complete. The first year of planning would be dedicated to site identification, land development and campus design. The second year would be dedicated to planned construction.