

# **Hernando County School District and BloomBoard**

## **“Learn It” University Program Proposal**

**Presented to**

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### PROPOSAL SUMMARY

BloomBoard, Inc. (“**BBI**”) is a talent development company with a core focus in supporting the preparation, advancement, and retention of PreK-12 educators. We partner with school districts across the country to embed educator advancement programs into the day-to-day logistics of the classroom. Our fully accredited, portfolio-based degree and certification programs recognize and respect educators’ time, attract and retain strong talent, and help district leaders sustainably develop their educator pipelines. We work with a portfolio of higher education institutions to offer our district partners affordable apprenticeship and residency-like degree and certification programs that develop educators’ skills and advance their careers through our unique on-the-job learning model.

The Hernando County School District (“**HCSD**”) is the leading catalyst and advocate for public education on the west, central coast of Florida. HCSD educated approximately 23,000 students in grades Pre-K-12 across 23 schools. HCSD employs almost 1,500 teachers. In the HCSD Strategic Plan published in 2018, the district established five Pillars to direct its collective focus and resources over the next five years. One of the Pillars is titled “People,” with the objective of strategically recruiting, developing, and retaining quality staff by providing staff with the appropriate coaching, support, and professional learning opportunities:

Hernando County School District, Pillar 2 lists three objectives, at the time of this proposal, two of which can be satisfied using BloomBoard programs (with the third coming soon):

- *Objective A: enhance recruitment and hiring process.*
- *Objective B: Build leadership capacity at all levels* (program coming soon through BloomBoard)
- *Objective C: increase the employee retention rate of qualified personnel.*  
([HCSD Strategic Plan, Pillar 2](#))

Pursuant to this proposal, BBI will support HCSD in its efforts to achieve these objectives by guiding HCSD through the creation and implementation of a portfolio based “Learn It University” program (“**Learn It-U**”) designed to create various pathways to increase the number of qualified educators within HCSD. BBI offers the following competency-based educator advancement programs, all of which can ultimately be incorporated into Learn It-U:

☐ Full Bachelor’s Degree Program: This Program provides job-embedded coursework, coaching, and classroom experience to enable aspiring educators who do not have a college degree (or have some credit hours not yet totaling an associate degree) to complete the credit hours necessary to earn a fully accredited Bachelor’s Degree in Elementary Education [and Special Education] and official teaching certification. For the Teacher Apprenticeship Program, each participant will need to undergo a transcript review to determine credits required to earn the fully accredited bachelor’s degree.

☐ Post-Associates Bachelor's Degree Program (ATS Program): This Program provides job-embedded coursework, coaching, and classroom experience to enable aspiring educators who have an associate degree and are seeking a college degree to complete the credit hours necessary to earn a fully accredited Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education [and Special Education] and official teaching certification. For the Teacher Apprenticeship Program, each participant will earn sixty credit hours by completing twenty courses.

The Program courses are offered through BBI's higher education partners, whom BBI has contracted with to provide such courses to the District's educators. Because each of member of the District's cohorts may come to their respective Program with varying levels of existing credit hours and background experience, the BBI team is trained to commence each implementation by designing a personalized pathway with each candidate based on transfer and test out credit, current classroom assignment, timing during the school year, and preferred pacing.

Prior to commencing cohort engagement, BBI and the District will engage in a planning session to confirm the Program components to be prioritized by Hernando County School District's number of participants who will enroll in the Program, and the desired Program timing. BBI and HCSD will plan the launch dates for each Program cohort and work together to promote the opportunities within the Hernando County community. Concurrently, BBI will also provide registered apprenticeship process management consulting services to the District, as detailed in the next section of this proposal.

### HERNANDO COUNTY SCHOOLS COMPONENTS

#### **Portfolio-Based Certification and Degree Program:**

BBI's Educator Advancement Programs require learners to be active participants in a combination of on-line and synchronous learning processes provided by its higher education partners in partnership with BBI's implementation team. Each course within a Program includes 3 portfolio-based unit assessments, and the BBI Team provides coaching and structured learning cohort events to guide participants through learning activities and portfolio development. The learning activities build upon key concepts with research, case studies, and other examples. Synchronous learning events can be personalized per participant and cohort needs but include structured collaborative discussions and assignments around the learning activities, portfolio creation, and platform navigation. Participants demonstrate their knowledge, skill, and competence through the submission of a structured portfolio to pass each unit within a course.

Participants will also have access to collaboration tools on the BBI Platform, which they can use to engage with cohort peers as well as expert facilitators as they work through the unit assessments within each course. In addition, every portfolio submission is reviewed by trained and calibrated assessors. If the participant meets the submittal requirements for all units within a course, faculty from BBI's higher education partner will issue a passing grade and the associated credit hours for the subject course. If the participant requires additional work to meet the submittal requirements, the faculty will provide feedback and encourage the participant to resubmit a revised portfolio to pass the unit assessment.

### **Registered Apprenticeship Program Consulting:**

BBI's Teacher Apprenticeship Certification Program provides job-embedded coursework, coaching, and classroom experience to enable aspiring educators who do not have a college degree to complete the credit hours necessary to earn a fully accredited Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education [and/or Special Education] and be eligible to apply for a teaching certificate pending compliance with all relevant state requirements. BBI will work with HCSD to refine and submit this Program to the U.S. Department of Labor and/or relevant State Apprenticeship Agency for approval as a Registered Apprenticeship Program in Teaching.

Registered Apprenticeships are approved by the U.S. Department of Labor if they meet the Department's standards for rigor and quality. A Registered Apprenticeship confers a nationally recognized credential for apprentices, along with worker protections like minimum pay rules, and unlocks state and federal workforce dollars to fund the program. The U.S. Department of Labor recently announced that Tennessee will sponsor the country's first Registered Apprenticeship for K-12 teachers. HCSD wishes to pursue a similar approach to gain approval of a Registered Apprenticeship for the State's educators. BBI will provide strategic consultation, design support and technical assistance to HCSD to obtain Registered Apprenticeship approval from the U.S. Department of Labor for BBI's Teacher Apprenticeship Certification Program, as follows:

- BBI will help HCSD identify key Program partners;
- BBI will help HCSD identify and design the Program's on the job competencies;
- BBI will provide HCSD liaison services between the state, district, educator preparation providers (EPP), and other key Program entities, as needed;
- BBI will deliver informational webinars to provide background on the work in Tennessee, potential benefits, and adaptations to the local context for HCSD;
- BBI will draft, edit, and review all Registered Apprenticeship Program documents required by U.S. and/or State Department of Labor; and
- BBI will provide liaison services between Hernando County School District and U.S. DOL regional office staff on Registered Apprenticeship Program application and required edits.

### **DISTRICT EXPECTATIONS AND ASSURANCES**

Through this partnership, Hernando County School District will operate under the following expectations and is committed to providing the following assurances:

- HCSD will recruit participants to enroll in the Learn It U program.
- For the apprenticeship components of the Program to be successful, HCSD will agree to abide by the Programmatic Assurances set forth in Appendix A.
- Unless otherwise compelled via legal request (e.g. FOIA, etc.), HCSD will keep the terms of this agreement strictly confidential and will not share any structure or pricing information with outside parties without express written consent from BBI.

### BLOOMBOARD EXPECTATIONS AND DELIVERABLES

Through this partnership, BBI will operate under the following expectations and is committed to providing the following deliverables:

- BBI will support HCSD in its efforts to recruit participants to enroll in the Learn It U program.
- BBI will provide support to HCSD to enable the district to implement the Program consistent with the Programmatic Assurances set forth in Appendix A.
- BBI will coordinate with BBI's university partners on an ongoing basis to facilitate successful Program implementation and timely issuance of credit hours and degrees by BBI's university partners to successful Program candidates.
- BBI will provide all Program participants access to BBI Platform licenses to engage in the Program courses and unit assessments. Platform access will include portfolio submission and review tools and services, virtual collaboration and facilitation tools and services, access to public and private resources associated with each unit, and the creation of a District personalized pathway on the BBI platform.
- With leadership from the HCSD team, the BBI Educator Success Team will support the expansion of the Programs based upon the results of this implementation.

### CONSIDERATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

Having now contracted with eighteen state departments of education and hundreds of districts on educator advancement implementations, BBI has extensive experience managing the critical aspects of the implementation, communication, stakeholder engagement, and educator buy-in processes. As part of our work over the past five years, we have developed an implementation framework covering four key Educator Success Principles: Strong Vision, Meaningful Incentives, Strategic Supports, and a Phased Approach. These Principles have been found to greatly increase educator buy-in, reduce resistance, align workloads, and reinforce motivation, all while ensuring quality and rigor.

As part of this partnership, BBI will work closely with HCSD leadership to develop a strategic communication and implementation plan. The goal of this plan will be to generate buy-in across all involved stakeholder groups and create excitement about this new aligned approach to educator advancement. This plan will include a timeline of milestones across various communication modalities (including video, in-person workshops, webinars, and written communications), all focused on a coherent theme for meaningful vision setting and expectation alignment.

### TIMELINE

#### ***High-Level Project Plan (Tentative and Subject to Change):***

- **June 2024:** HCSD and BBI sign a partnership agreement.
- **Ongoing Throughout Program Terms:** HCSD and BBI engage in planning sessions to determine the implementation plan, launch dates, and cohort numbers for the HCSD. BBI supports HCSD in the District's efforts to recruit participants to engage in the Program cohorts,

including the creation and distribution of promotional materials, communication plans, and implementation plans.

- **Ongoing Throughout Program Terms:** The BBI Educator Success Team and HCSD staff will support the implementation of a comprehensive recruitment, selection, and celebration campaign to create awareness in the community for this new approach to teacher certification and advancement.
- **Ongoing Throughout Program Terms:** HCSD and BBI will launch the Program cohort(s) as determined by HCSD.
- **Ongoing Throughout Program Term:** Program participants will complete the application process to become students of BBI's university partners, and BBI and HCSD will support participants as they engage in the Program coursework and unit assessments using the BBI Platform.
- **Ongoing Throughout Program Terms:** The BBI Educator Success Team will provide virtual support to HCSD staff and Program participants to support the Program implementation process.
- **Ongoing Throughout Program Terms:** BBI and HCSD leadership will engage in semi-regular check-in calls, as needed, to discuss product feedback, onboarding logistics, and partnership successes and challenges.
- **Ongoing Throughout Program Terms:** The BBI Educator Success Team and HCSD staff will conduct a mid-Program check-in to assess the progress of the Program participants and determine potential Program course corrections and/or subsequent next steps.
- **Ongoing Throughout Program Terms:** The BBI Educator Success Team and HCSD will meet to assess the outcomes of the initial implementation year and ongoing cohorts and discuss Program expansion options for Academic Year 2025-2026.

### ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Platform integrations and Single Sign-on (SSO):

- The BBI Platform used to deliver the Program courses and unit assessments currently supports SSO utilizing SAML2.0.
- Browser compatibility – Chrome and Safari are recommended for full Platform functionality. Due to lack of CSS support, Internet Explorer is not advised.
- No third-party browser plugin software is required for full Platform functionality (e.g. Flash, Java, etc.)

## PRICING

**Total Cost: \$\_\_\_\_\_**

- Full Bachelor's Degree Program \*:

- \$1,350 per participant per course (**40 courses for 0 → BA in Education program over 3 years**) = \$47,700 per participant in total tuition, \$15,900 per year
  - **\$4,100 expected candidate contribution per year for three years.** Each candidate will be required to file for financial aid via the FAFSA process with an estimated expected candidate contribution of \$4,100. If in aggregate, Pell funding across the cohort is above or below the estimated candidate awards of \$4,100 per candidate per year, the total Hernando cost structure will be reconciled for subsequent semesters.
- Flat rate district investment per year total per participant, with upfront payment upon enrollment:
  - Up to 14 participants = \$11,800 per year for three years (\$35,400 total)
  - 15-24 participants = \$10,875 per year for three years (\$32,625 total)
  - **25 or more participants = \$9,950 per year for three years (\$29,850 total)**
- \_\_\_\_ number of participants times \$\_\_\_\_ amount = \$\_\_\_\_ total investment

\*See Appendix A for Programmatic Assurances for Teacher Apprenticeship-Based Bachelor's Degree

- Post-Associates Bachelor's Degree Program (ATS Program) \*:

- \$1,350 per participant per course (**20 courses for the full AA → BA in Education program over 2-3 years**) = \$27,000 per participant in total tuition, \$13,500 per year
  - **\$4,100 expected candidate contribution per year.** Each candidate will be required to file for financial aid via the FAFSA process with an estimated expected candidate contribution of \$4,100. If in aggregate, Pell funding across the cohort is above or below the estimated candidate awards of \$4,100 per candidate per year, the total Hernando cost structure will be reconciled for subsequent semesters.
- Flat rate district investment per year total per participant, with upfront payment upon enrollment:
  - Up to 14 participants = \$9,400 per year for two years (\$18,800 total)
  - 15-24 participants = \$8,575 per year for two years (\$17,150 total)
  - **25 or more participants = \$7,750 per year for two years (\$15,500 total)**
- \_\_\_\_ number of participants times \$\_\_\_\_ amount = \$\_\_\_\_ total investment

\*See Appendix A for Programmatic Assurances for Teacher Apprenticeship-Based Bachelor's Degree



**Support Services Included in the Per User Program Fees:** In addition to access to the BBI Platform for the participants to access and upload portfolios of evidence to pass all the required unit assessments within each course, the per user Program Fees include all the following support services during the Program term:

- Ongoing Technical and User Support Services;
- Service Upgrades to the BBI Platform;
- Ongoing Training, support and regular feedback sessions for the HCSD team;
- Cohort facilitation by expert facilitators.

APPENDIX A

**Programmatic Assurances for Teacher Apprenticeship-Based Bachelor's Degree\***

1. **Regular Time in Residence:** Each Program participant shall have regularly scheduled time (e.g., one period per day) in their residency placement to work on coursework, do observations, and practice teaching methods as required by the coursework or higher education institution. This time shall be protected and provided in addition to the planning time routinely provided to teachers with similar grade/subject assignments.
2. **Elementary Classroom:** Each Program participant shall be assigned to a general education elementary classroom, as defined by the grades specified on the state's elementary teacher license during their "time in residency," and have access to a group of students for 4-6 weeks at a time (as opposed to changing classrooms every day).
3. **Special Education:** If participants are working towards a degree in Special Education, they shall be assigned a general education class with students who have IEPs in the class during their "time in residency," within the grades specified by the university program.
4. **Every Subject Area:** Each Program participant shall have the ability to teach in each subject area (ELA, math, science, and social studies) as needed during terms in which the participant is taking specified methods coursework if not self-contained.
5. **Class Authority:** Each Program participant must have a similar level of access and permissions as would typically be afforded to a student teacher completing a clinical placement, including the opportunity to regularly lead lessons, make instructional decisions (e.g., pacing, grouping of students, formative assessment methods, etc.), interact with parents, and review pertinent information about their students in accordance with school/school system policies, as required by the coursework. Participants also need to either own or co-own the classroom space and culture, including the opportunity to establish norms and routines.
6. **Synchronous Supports:** Each Program Participant shall attend approximately one hour per week of synchronous classes for the first semester of the Program and at least one hour per month throughout the program as determined by the higher education institution. The Program Participant shall comply with the synchronous class participation requirements established by the respective higher education institution. When feasible, the higher education institution will strive to embed these synchronous classes into the workday depending on cohort size and district consortia structure, and all classes will be recorded.
7. **Access to Curriculum:** Each Program Participant shall be provided with curriculum and instructional materials in each subject area they are assigned to teach, including but not limited to a scope and sequence, unit plans, necessary texts, detailed lesson plans, assessments, and student-facing materials. In math and ELA (at a minimum), these materials should "meet expectations" as defined by EdReports or a similar state/local adoption process. While participants may make adjustments to lessons to meet the needs of students, they should not be expected to develop their own instructional materials, particularly during their first year as an apprentice.
8. **Mentor/Cooperating Teacher and Training:** Each Program participant shall be assigned a local "mentor" or "cooperating teacher" teacher with an "effective" rating (if applicable) and at least two (2) years of classroom experience (or the number of years designated by the higher education institution and state requirements) who will be reasonably available to the teacher apprentice during working hours to provide feedback, advice, and/or guidance. The "mentor" or "cooperating teacher" shall be the teacher where the participant does the majority of the "residence," including student teaching, where applicable. If the participant is a long-term sub, the ideal "mentor" or "cooperating teacher" is one with the same grade and subject

assignments such that they share a curriculum or be an instructional coach for the participant. The district shall ensure that all “mentor” or “cooperating teacher” teachers attend BBI training and BBI program orientation.

9. **Student Teaching:** The district shall allow participants to complete student teaching requirements, as set forth by the higher education institution and/or state policy. BloomBoard works with each higher education institution to design unique student teaching experiences that are integrated throughout the Program during the candidate’s “time in residency.”
10. **FAFSA and other Grants:** As determined by the district funding strategy, participants will apply for FAFSA and other identified and agreed upon federal (e.g., the TEACH Grant), state, and/or local funding opportunities as well as additional available federal and state funding for apprenticeship or apprenticeship-like programs, as identified by the higher education institution, yearly or on the timeline required by the program. Any state or federal funding granted to the participant as a result of such applications will be paid directly to the institution of higher education.
11. **Best Practices:** The district acknowledges the following best practices and agrees to consider them.
  1. Utilize a **memo/commitment of understanding** ([template](#)) with participants, stipulating the terms of the benefit including costs, repayments and employment requirements.
  2. Ensure principals at participating schools attend a BBI information session.
  3. Assign a senior-level instructional coach or curriculum director as a **Program Lead** and overarching program mentor to participants. This program lead shall: attend Program training(s); regularly and consistently communicate with BBI to track participant progress and support program implementation; and coordinate with BBI to train mentor teachers, principals, and other staff as needed.
  4. Program participants receive the same **informational communications** and are invited to attend the same professional development and meetings as teachers with similar grade/subject assignments, as appropriate. Districts provide initial orientation on the following topics: ethics/professional conduct rules, FERPA, technology-related policies, and any policies specific to the school/system.