



SOUTH TAMPA HOME BUYER GUIDE

The Plant High School District Guide

What to know about the zone before you make an offer

KELLY BURCHILL

Broker Associate | Compass | Fall 2026 Edition

WHY PLANT MATTERS

Plant is the reason a lot of families look at South Tampa in the first place.

I understand why. I'm a Plant grad. So is my husband, and our kids went to Plant too. I grew up in Sunset Park, a few minutes from campus, and I've spent my career selling homes in the neighborhoods around it.

Here's the part most people miss. At Plant, your address decides where your kids go to school. So the zone isn't just a school question. It's a real estate question. This guide covers what I tell every family before they start touring.

QUICK FACTS

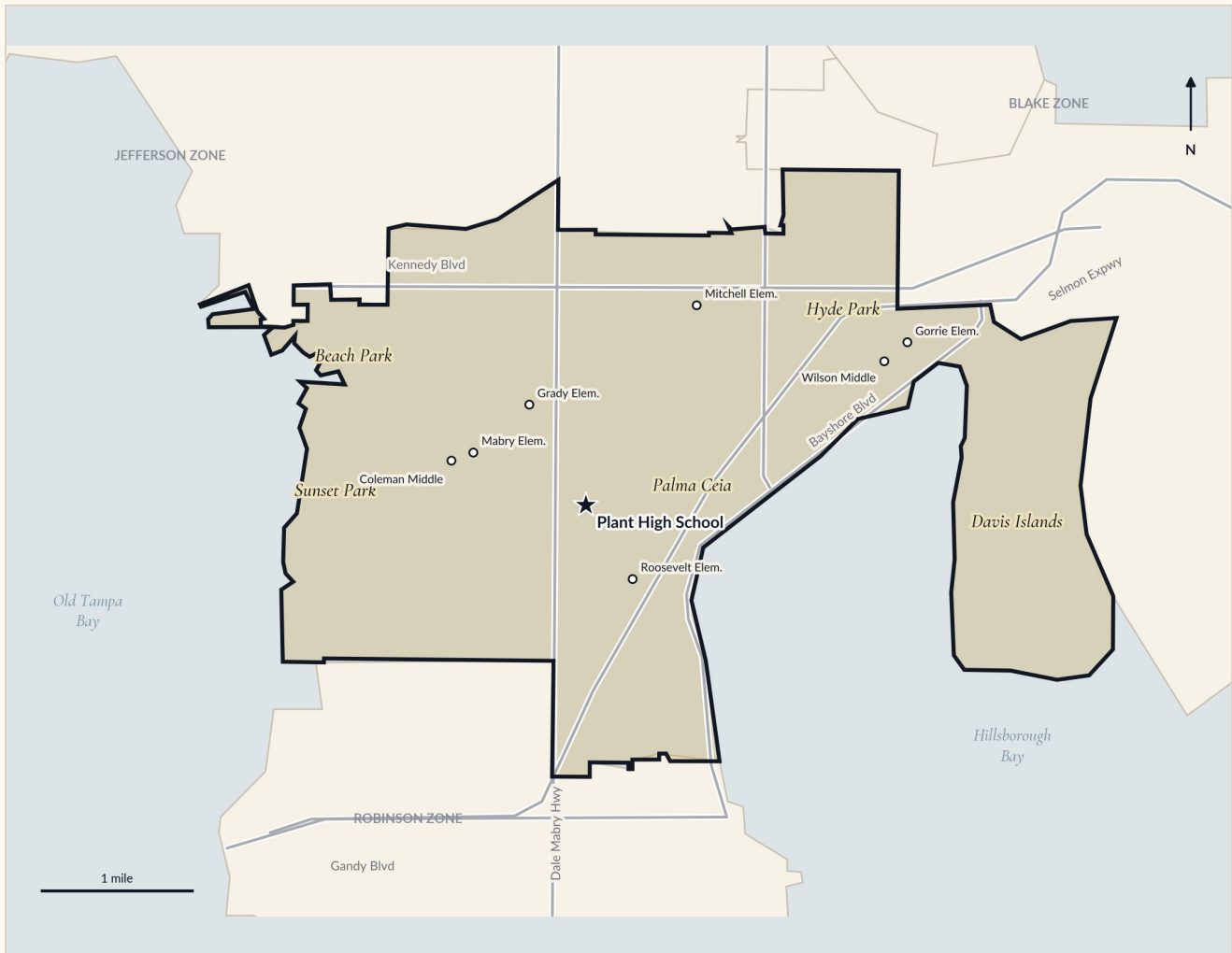
Address	2415 S. Himes Ave., Tampa, FL 33629
School district	Hillsborough County Public Schools
Grades	9 through 12
Students	About 2,400, with a student-teacher ratio around 28 to 1
Opened	1927. The original Mediterranean-style building is still in use.
Niche (2026)	A+ overall. #1 of 40 public high schools in Hillsborough County.
U.S. News (2026)	#41 in Florida
Coursework	More than 30 AP courses and more than 40 honors courses
Beyond class	Award-winning music program. FHSAA state titles across many sports.
Mascot and motto	Panthers. "Strength Through Unity."

Sources: Hillsborough County Public Schools, Niche and U.S. News & World Report, as of September 2026.

THE ZONE

The Plant attendance zone, 2026–27

The gold area is the official Plant High School zone for the 2026–27 school year, drawn from the school district's own boundary data. It runs from Kennedy Boulevard down to the Gandy area, and from Old Tampa Bay across to Davis Islands.



How to read it: the star is Plant. White dots are the public elementary and middle schools that feed into it. Street-level boundaries can split a block, so this map is for orientation. Always confirm a specific address with the district.

Boundary source: Hillsborough County Public Schools 2026–27 attendance zones (HCPS School Zones Locator), retrieved September 2026. Boundaries are subject to change by School Board action.

Which neighborhoods are zoned for Plant?

The zone generally covers the heart of South Tampa. These neighborhoods typically fall inside it:

- Beach Park
- Sunset Park
- Palma Ceia
- Virginia Park
- Golfview
- Parkland Estates
- Historic Hyde Park
- Davis Islands

I say "typically" on purpose. Parts of a neighborhood can be zoned differently than the rest of it, and streets near the edges are where I see the most surprises.

The feeder schools

If you have younger kids, the whole path matters, not just high school. Based on the district's 2026–27 zones, these public schools cover the Plant zone:

Elementary	Gorrie, Mabry, Mitchell, Roosevelt and Grady
Middle	Coleman and Wilson

One thing to know: living in the Plant zone doesn't automatically put you in any one of these. Each has its own boundary, so check the elementary and middle assignment for the exact address too.

THE PRIVATE SCHOOL PATH

Private school first. Plant for high school.

It's very common for kids to spend elementary and middle school at one of South Tampa's private schools, like St. John's, St. Mary's or Christ the King, then come to Plant for high school.

My husband and I both did it. So did our kids. A lot of families here do the same. Just remember that the high school part still depends on your address.

Why the zone shows up in the price

Plant has been over capacity and closed to school choice transfers. For most families, living in the zone is the only way in. That makes the zone part of the property.

Two similar houses a mile apart can see very different demand simply because one is zoned for Plant and one isn't. I've watched buyers pay more to lock in the zone years before their kids reach high school.

A few things I tell buyers:

- **The premium buys you demand later, too.** Homes in the zone tend to hold buyer interest when the broader market slows. That matters when you sell.
- **Edge-of-zone homes need extra homework.** A house one street from the line can be priced like it's in the zone. Make sure it is.
- **Don't overpay for a zone you won't use.** If your kids are toddlers and you'll likely move before high school, weigh the premium against how long you'll really stay.
- **Sellers, say it clearly.** If your home is in the zone, it belongs in the first line of your marketing.

FLOOD ZONES INSIDE THE PLANT ZONE

Check the flood zone before you fall in love.

A lot of Plant-zoned streets sit low. Beach Park, parts of Bayshore and Davis Islands are right on the water. The same streets families want for the school can carry real flood risk.

I grew up in a South Tampa house that flooded four times, and I still live in a flood zone today. Before you write an offer, look up the FEMA flood zone, ask for the elevation certificate and get a flood insurance quote. My Flood Zone vs. Evacuation Zone guide at kellyburchill.com walks through it.

Buy around the school calendar, not against it.

Most families I work with want to be moved in before the first day of school. Work backward from that date. Tampa's busiest buying season overlaps with the summer, so the earlier you start, the more choices you'll have.

What to know about registering

- **You register at your neighborhood school.** Students who are new to Hillsborough County public schools also complete the district's online registration first.
- **You'll need proof of address.** The district asks for two documents showing where you live, such as a lease, closing documents or a utility bill in your name. You also sign a residency form under penalty of perjury, so the district takes this seriously.
- **Haven't closed yet?** Ask the school what it will accept for your situation before you count on a start date.
- **Have a high school athlete?** Changing schools doesn't guarantee athletic eligibility. Ask the school about it early.
- **Check next year's zones, too.** The district sometimes posts the next school year's boundaries early. When I checked in September 2026, 2027–28 zones were already in the district's School Zones Locator.

Registration rules can change. Confirm current requirements at hillsboroughschools.org/enrollment.

A SIMPLE TIMELINE

Winter	Get clear on the zone, your budget and your must-haves. Start touring.
Spring	This is when a lot of South Tampa inventory hits. Aim to be under contract.
Early summer	Close, and gather your proof-of-address documents.
July	Move in and register at your neighborhood school.
August	First day of school.

The five-minute zone check

- 1 Don't trust the listing.**
Listing descriptions, online maps and even the seller's word can be out of date.

- 2 Look up the exact address.**
Use the district's School Zones Locator or the "Find your neighborhood school" tool at hillsboroughschools.org.

- 3 Check elementary and middle school too.**
Lines below high school move as well. In April 2026, the School Board voted to close Madison Middle in South Tampa and reassign most of its students to the Monroe campus.

- 4 Call the district if it's close.**
If the home sits near a boundary line, call student placement and confirm before you write an offer. Not after.

- 5 Don't plan on a transfer.**
Plant has been over capacity and closed to school choice transfers. Check the district's current choice list each year.

Questions to ask on every showing

- Which elementary, middle and high school is this exact address zoned for this year and next?
- What flood zone is it in, and is there an elevation certificate?
- Has the house ever taken on water? Ask directly, and read the seller's disclosure.
- What does flood and wind insurance cost here? Get a quote, not a guess.
- How long is the morning drive to school? Himes Avenue backs up at drop-off.

OTHER PATHS

What if the right house isn't in the zone?

It happens more than you'd think. The right house for your family may be a few streets outside the line, or the zone may stretch your budget too far.

Some families choose a private high school instead. The ones South Tampa families most often compare include Jesuit, the Academy of the Holy Names, Berkeley Preparatory School, Tampa Preparatory School and Tampa Catholic. Each has its own admissions process and tuition, so start early.

Others buy just outside the zone and plan to move closer before high school. That can work well. Just go in with a clear plan and realistic timing.

There's no single right answer. The best choice depends on your kids, your budget and how long you plan to stay. Happy to talk it through.

RELOCATING FROM OUT OF STATE?

Pick the zone first. Then the house.

In a lot of places, school choice means applications, lotteries and a lot of strategy. In South Tampa, your address largely decides it. That's simpler, but less forgiving.

If you're moving from New York or anywhere else, start with the zone and work from there. Plan the move around the school calendar so enrollment isn't a scramble in August.

LET'S TALK

Want to know if a home is zoned for Plant?



Send me the address or the neighborhood you're considering. I'll pull the current boundary and tell you what I know about the street. It takes about five minutes.

KELLY BURCHILL

Broker Associate | Compass

813.758.3292 | kelly.burchill@compass.com

kellyburchill.com

A third-generation South Tampa native, H.B. Plant High School graduate and former TV news reporter, Kelly specializes in South Tampa luxury real estate, physician relocation and connecting buyers and sellers between Tampa and New York City. *Two Markets. One Strategy.*

Sources: Hillsborough County Public Schools (hillsboroughschools.org/plant; school choice, enrollment and residency information; 2026-27 attendance zone data); Niche 2026 rankings; U.S. News & World Report 2026 Best High Schools; WUSF, April 2026. Rankings reflect published data as of September 2026.

School attendance zones are set and updated by Hillsborough County Public Schools and can change. Always confirm current boundaries directly with the district before making a purchase decision based on school assignment. This guide is for general informational purposes only.

Kelly Burchill is a real estate agent affiliated with Compass. Compass Florida, LLC D/B/A Compass is a licensed real estate broker and abides by equal housing opportunity laws. All material presented herein is intended for informational purposes only. Information is compiled from sources deemed reliable but is subject to errors, omissions and changes without notice. This is not intended to solicit property already listed.