

Overview

The Florida Legislature created the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher and Principal Allocation with the stated purpose of recruiting, retaining, and recognizing classroom teachers, instructional personnel, and principals based on criteria identified in law.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

- 1. Classroom Teacher** — Defined in Florida Statute 1012.01(2)(a) to include K-12 teachers that are assigned the professional activity of instructing students in courses in classroom situations. By law, "classroom teacher" does not include student services personnel, instructional coaches, or paraprofessionals/instructional assistants. It also does not include teachers exclusively serving students in Pre-K or post-secondary programs. Teachers will be determined to be "classroom teachers" if they are assigned K-12 students in one or more courses for at least one period during each student day and also provide regular instruction to those assigned students.

- 2. Content Expert in Math, Science, Computer Science, Reading, or Civics** — Defined by Florida State Board of Education Rule 6AER19-01 as a teacher who has earned a Master's Degree in one or more of the associated subject areas, or who has earned a Bachelor's Degree with at least 5 years of work experience in one or more of the associated subject areas.

- 3. Four Consecutive School Years** — The current school year in which the awards are to be paid, and the three school years immediately preceding the award year.

- 4. Instructional Personnel** — Defined in Florida Statute 1012.01(2)(a) through (d) as any K-12 staff member whose function includes the provision of direct instructional services to students or whose functions provide direct support in the learning process of students. This includes classroom teachers, student services personnel, and instructional coaches. This does not include paraprofessionals/instructional assistants or teachers exclusively serving students in Pre-K and post-secondary programs.

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- 5. Newly Hired** — Initial employment in Sarasota County as an instructional staff member. This initial employment can be with either a District managed school or charter school; however, a teacher shall only be eligible for one recruitment award in their lifetime. Teachers previously employed in an instructional capacity in any Sarasota school or department, District managed or charter, prior to July 1, 2019, shall not be eligible for an award from this category.
- 6. Performance Criteria and Policies Adopted by the Board** — For the purpose of this award, this provision shall be defined as instructional personnel who received an overall summative evaluation rating of "Highly Effective" or "Effective" for the school year immediately preceding the award year.
- 7. Principal** — Defined in Florida Statute 1012.01(3)(c) as K-12 staff members performing the assigned activities as the administrative head of a school and to whom have been delegated responsibility for the coordination and administrative direction of the instructional and non-instructional activities of the school. This does not include principals exclusively serving Pre-K or post-secondary programs.
- 8. Qualifying School** - A School that has Improved an Average of 3 Percentage Points or More in the Percentage of Total Possible Points Achieved for Determining School Grades over the Past 3 Years. Annually, a list of eligible schools will be identified by the Florida Department of Education and provided to the District. Schools that receive an improvement rating instead of a school grade have been determined to be ineligible by Florida Department of Education Rule.
- 9. Rated as "Highly Effective" or "Effective" the Preceding Year** — Defined as receiving an overall summative evaluation rating of "Highly Effective" or "Effective" for the school year immediately preceding the award year.
- 10. Selected by His or Her School Principal** — For the purpose of this award, eligible instructional personnel shall be deemed to have met this criteria once they are determined to have met all other eligibility criteria associated with this award.
- 11. Two Consecutive School Years** — The current school year in which the awards are to be paid, and the school year immediately preceding the award year.

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Award Categories

As specified in law, the following teacher and principal awards are to be provided by the District utilizing the annual appropriation identified by the state:

1. A one-time recruitment award to newly hired classroom teachers who are determined to be a content expert, based on criteria established by the Florida Department of Education, in the areas of math, science, computer science, reading, or civics.
2. An annual retention award to classroom teachers who:
 - a. Received a summative evaluation rating of "Highly Effective" or "Effective" the preceding school year;
 - b. Are teaching at a school that has improved an average of 3 percentage points or more in the percentage of total possible points achieved for determining school grades over the past 3 years; and
 - c. Taught at the same qualifying school for two consecutive school years, including the current school year.
3. An annual retention award to school principals who:
 - a. Are currently serving as the school principal at a school that has improved an average of 3 percentage points or more in the percentage of total possible points achieved for determining school grades over the past 3 years; and
 - b. Served as the school principal at that same school for 4 consecutive school years, including the current school year.
4. An annual recognition award to instructional personnel who:
 - a. Received a summative evaluation rating of "Highly Effective" or "Effective" the preceding year; and
 - b. Were selected by his or her school principal to receive the award, based on performance criteria and policies adopted by the District or charter school governing board.

Employees may not be eligible for awards in more than one category in a single award year. Employees earning a retention award are not eligible to receive a recognition award.

Funding

The Florida Legislature annually establishes the total funding allocation for each school district. The District's allocation is based on its proportional share of statewide FEFP base funding using weighted FTE. Each approved charter school operating within the District shall be provided its proportional share of the District's allocation using the same FEFP base funding and weighted FTE formula employed by the state to determine the District's allocation.

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Award Amounts

Charter school governing boards are responsible for distributing funds pursuant to state law.

The amount of each award is established by the Florida Legislature through the annual General Appropriations Act. The District must pay the awards specified in law for categories 1, 2, and 3 above prior to paying any category 4 awards. The amount for category 2 and 3 awards are contained in statute. The amount for category 1 awards must be agreed to in writing by the School Board and the collective bargaining agent. The amount of individual category 4 awards shall be determined by dividing the number of eligible instructional personnel by the total amount of funding remaining after all category 1, 2, and 3 awards have been paid in full and payment of the employer portion of payroll taxes. Should the District's specific appropriation of funds be insufficient to pay the amounts required for categories 1, 2, and 3 above, each award amount shall be pro-rated to match the District's specific appropriation and no category 4 awards will be paid.

The award amounts identified in law or, in the case of category 1 or 4 awards, by policy are considered to be gross award amounts. Category 2 and 3 awards will be paid when the funds are received by the District and employees' evaluations are complete. Category 1 and 4 awards will be paid when the funds are received by the District, when employees' evaluations are complete, and upon agreement of the amounts with the collective bargaining agent.

One-Time Recruitment Award

Any newly hired classroom teacher who meets the criteria identified in law, subject to the definitions contained within this policy, shall be eligible for a One-Time Recruitment Award provided he/she:

1. Began working for the District on or after July 1, 2019 for the 2019/2020; and
2. Was employed continuously in a classroom teacher position through the payment date of the award or the last scheduled workday of the year in which the award is paid, whichever occurs first.

Any amount not specifically required to be paid by law is subject to collective bargaining.

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Annual Classroom Teacher Retention Award

Any classroom teacher who meets the criteria identified in law, subject to the definitions contained within this policy, shall be eligible for an Annual Classroom Teacher Retention Award provided he/she:

1. Was employed as a classroom teacher during 3 of the 4 October and February FTE survey windows at the same eligible school over the two-year eligibility period; and
2. Was employed in a classroom teacher position at the same qualifying school through the payment date of the award or the last scheduled workday of the year in which the award is paid, whichever occurs first.

Annual Principal Retention Award

Any principal who meets the criteria identified in law, subject to the definitions contained within this policy, shall be eligible for an Annual Principal Retention Award provided he/she:

1. Was employed as a principal during 7 of the 8 October and February FTE survey windows at the same eligible school over the four-year eligibility period; and
2. Was employed as the principal at the same qualifying school through the payment date of the award or the last scheduled workday of the year in which the award is paid, whichever occurs first.

Annual Instructional Personnel Recognition Award

Instructional personnel who meet the criteria identified in law, subject to the definitions contained within this policy, shall be eligible for an Annual Instructional Personnel Recognition Awards provided they were employed in an eligible instructional position through the payment date of the award and were employed by the School Board one day more than half of the prior school year.

Employees earning a retention award are not eligible to receive a recognition award.

Any amount not specifically required to be paid by law is subject to collective bargaining.

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Supplementation

The Superintendent is authorized to enter into negotiations with the collective bargaining agent to supplement these awards using other funds of the District including general funds. Any agreement reached must be approved by both the School Board and the collective bargaining agent.

Duration

This policy shall terminate on June 30, 2020.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: 1001.41(2), 1001.42, F.S.

LAW(S) IMPLEMENTED: 1011.62, 1012.731, 1012.732, F.S.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION RULE(S):

HISTORY: **ADOPTED: 01/09/20**

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