



**The Best & Brightest Teacher and Principal Program  
Eligibility for Retention Award and Principal Award  
Frequently Asked Questions  
July 17, 2019**

**What is a retention award?**

To be eligible for a retention award, a classroom teacher must have been rated as highly effective or effective the preceding year pursuant to [section 1012.34, Florida Statutes](#), and teach in a school for 2 consecutive school years, including the current year, which has improved an average of 3 percentage points or more in the percentage of total possible points achieved for determining school grades over the prior 3 years.

**How is the average of the 3 percentage point increase calculated for the retention and principal awards?**

Because there are a number of ways to interpret this requirement, and to ensure the maximum number of possible teachers are eligible for this award, the department has developed three separate calculations to identify whether a school meets the *average of 3 percentage points growth* requirement. Any school that is identified for inclusion under any one of the three methods will be placed on the list. All percentages and averages are rounded to the nearest whole number. The three methods under which a school qualifies for inclusion on the list are:

Method 1 – A school shows an average growth of at least three percentage points across three growth periods. This calculation computes three differences across three growth periods and takes the average of them.

$$\begin{aligned} 2019 \text{ (Year 3)} - 2018 \text{ (Year 2)} &= A \\ 2018 \text{ (Year 2)} - 2017 \text{ (Year 1)} &= B \\ 2017 \text{ (Year 1)} - 2016 \text{ (Baseline Year)} &= C \\ (A+B+C)/3 &\geq 3 \end{aligned}$$

Method 2 – Same as method 1, except it uses only two growth periods for a total of three years in the calculation.

$$\begin{aligned} 2019 \text{ (Year 3)} - 2018 \text{ (Year 2)} &= A \\ 2018 \text{ (Year 2)} - 2017 \text{ (Year 1)} &= B \\ (A+B)/2 &\geq 3 \end{aligned}$$

Method 3 – A school that shows growth between year one and year three of at least 3 percentage points.

$$2019 \text{ (Year 3)} - 2017 \text{ (Year 1)} \geq 3$$

In future years, the years used in the calculations above will advance each year.



**Will the average of the 3 percentage point increase calculation be rounded?**

Yes. School grade percentage of total points earned are already rounded to the nearest whole number. Therefore, the average of those percentages will also be rounded to the nearest whole number.

**If a school receives an improvement rating instead of a school grade, are the teachers and principal eligible for the retention and principal award?**

No. For both the retention award and the principal award, a school must receive a school grade for any of its teachers or its principal to be eligible for these awards.

**Will FDOE provide a list of eligible schools for the retention award and principal award?**

Yes. The department will release the list following resolution of school grades appeals.

**How much money does an eligible retention award recipient receive?**

The amount is set annually by the legislature in the appropriations act. This year, the retention award is \$2,500 for highly effective teachers and \$1,000 for effective teachers. However, a district is authorized to prorate awards if the funds allocated to the district are insufficient to cover the awards.

**What does two consecutive school years actually mean for a retention award?**

Two consecutive school years means the prior school year and the current school year. Therefore, for awards this year, the teacher must have taught in the 2018-2019 school year and the 2019-2020 school year.

**What is a principal award?**

A school principal is eligible to receive an award if he or she has served as school principal at his or her school for at least four consecutive school years, including the current school year, and the school has improved an average of 3 percentage points or more in the percentage of total possible points achieved for determining school grades over the prior three years. The methodology for determining which schools qualify for consideration is the same as it is for the teacher retention award.

**How much money does an eligible principal award recipient receive?**

The amount is set annually by the legislature. This year, the principal award is \$5,000. However, a district is authorized to prorate awards if the funds allocated to the district are insufficient to cover the awards.

**What does four consecutive school years actually mean for the principal award?**

Four consecutive years means the three prior school years and the current school year. Therefore, for this year, the principal must have served as principal at his school for the 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years and still be principal at his school in the 2019-2020 school year.