

**District School Board of Pasco County**  
**Proposed Local Rule for Florida Best and Brightest Teacher and Principal Program Allocation**

**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. **Actively Employed** – Employees are considered actively employed if they are performing the duties of their position continuously and without interruption.
2. **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, in the District’s student management system, for at least one period during each student day and also provide regular instruction to those assigned students.
3. **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.
4. **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.
5. **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.
6. **Newly Hired** – Initial employment in Pasco 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 Pasco school or department, District managed or charter, prior to July 1, 2019, shall not be eligible for an award from this category.
7. **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.
8. **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 noninstructional activities of the school. This does not include principals exclusively serving Pre-K or post-secondary programs.

9. **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.
10. **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.
11. **Selected by His or Her School Principal** – For the purpose of the recognition 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 the award.
12. **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.

### **Award Categories**

As specified in law, the following teacher and principal awards are to be provided by the District or charter school governing board 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 be eligible for awards in more than one category in a single award year, provided he/she meets all of the eligibility criteria for each award individually.

### **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.

### **Award Amounts**

The maximum amount of each award is established by the Florida Legislature through the annual General Appropriations Act. The District and charter school governing boards must pay the full award amounts specified in law for categories 1, 2, and 3 above prior to paying any category 4 awards. 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. Should the District's or individual charter school governing board's specific appropriation of funds be insufficient to pay the full award amounts specified in law for categories 1, 2, and 3 above; each award amount shall be pro-rated to match the District's or charter school governing board's specific appropriation and no category 4 awards will be paid.

The award amounts identified in law or, in the case of category 4 awards, by policy are considered to be gross award amounts. All applicable employer and employee withholdings shall be deducted from these gross award amounts prior to payment of any award to an eligible instructional staff member or principal. Final eligibility for all award amounts shall be determined at the end of each academic year, and awards shall be paid prior to the end of the fiscal year.

### **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 school year, or began working for the District after the completion of the preceding February FTE survey window for all subsequent years;
2. Was continuously and actively employed 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; and
3. Completed any District required application for the award and provided any supporting documentation requested by the District to verify eligibility for an award.

### **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 actively employed as a classroom teacher during 3 of the 4 October and February FTE survey windows at the same qualifying school over the two-year eligibility period;
2. Was actively 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; and
3. Completed any District required application for the award, and provided any supporting documentation identified by the District to verify eligibility for an award.

#### **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 actively employed as a principal during 7 of the 8 October and February FTE survey windows at the same qualifying school over the four-year eligibility period;
2. Was actively 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; and
3. Completed any District required application for the award, and provided any supporting documentation identified by the District to verify eligibility for an award.

#### **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:

1. Were actively employed in an eligible instructional 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; and
2. Completed any District required application for the award, any provided any supporting documentation identified by the District to verify eligibility for an award.

#### **Eligibility Decisions**

As stated above, the District may require an application and/or supporting documentation to be provided by an employee seeking payment of one or more of the awards associated with the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher and Principal Allocation. Failure of an employee to provide timely or sufficient applications or supporting documentation, when requested, shall be considered a waiver of eligibility and the employee will not be entitled to an award. The sufficiency of an application and/or supporting documentation for any of the awards associated with the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher and Principal Allocation shall be determined by the Office for Human Resources and Educator Quality, and such decisions will be considered final.

#### **Duration**

Should the statutory framework or specific categorial funding appropriation related to the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher or Principal Allocation be withdrawn or substantially amended by the Florida

Legislature or a court of competent jurisdiction, this policy and the payments of any awards shall be immediately suspended until such time as a successor policy is developed and approved.

Should any portion of this policy be determined to be inconsistent with state law or deemed otherwise invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, this policy and the payment of awards shall be immediately suspended until such time as a successor policy is developed and approved.