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MEMORANDUM

To: School District Superintendents

From: Hershel Lyons

Date: August 11, 2017

Subject: **Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program for FY 2017-18**

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DPS: 2017-82

The 2017 Legislature revised section 1012.731, Florida Statutes (F.S.), *The Florida Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program*. The current statute is available at http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?mode=View%20Statutes&SubMenu=1&App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=1012.731&URL=1000-1099/1012/Sections/1012.731.html.

For 2017-2018, section 1012.731, F.S., continues to require that each district school board determine the eligibility of classroom teachers who qualify for the teacher scholarship. Each district school board should review the statute and make its own decision regarding eligibility questions.

The Florida Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program

There are three scholarships available under this section for the 2017-2018 school year in the amount of \$6,000, \$1,200 and \$800. Each scholarship has its own eligibility requirements that districts must review and administer locally.

Test Scores

For information about the availability of test scores, districts should contact ACT and the College Board directly.

Deadlines

No later than November 1, 2017:

Pursuant to s. 1012.731(3), F.S., for the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program, an eligible teacher must submit to the school district an official score report of his or her SAT or ACT score demonstrating that the teacher scored at or above the 80th percentile based on the percentile ranks in effect when the teacher took the assessment.

HERSHEL LYONS
CHANCELLOR OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program for FY 2017-18
August 11, 2017
Page Two

By December 1, 2017, the school district must submit the following information for the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program:

1. The number of eligible classroom teachers who qualify for The Florida Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship to the department. The department will provide additional reporting instructions to school districts and the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind in fall 2017; and
2. Name and master school identification number (MSID) of each district school to which eligible classroom teachers are assigned.

The department will provide instructions for how to submit the required information in the fall.

By February 1, 2018:

Based on the information provided by the school districts, the department will disburse scholarship funds to each school district for each eligible classroom teacher. Scholarship funds for eligible charter school teachers will be disbursed similar to other funds under s. 1002.33 (17).

By April 1, 2018:

Each school district will award the scholarship to each eligible classroom teacher.

Information regarding the Best and Brightest Principal Scholarship Program will be sent in the near future.

HL/em

The 2017 Florida Statutes

[Title XLVIII](#)
K-20 EDUCATION CODE

[Chapter 1012](#)
PERSONNEL

[View Entire Chapter](#)

1012.01 Definitions.—As used in this chapter, the following terms have the following meanings:

(1) **SCHOOL OFFICERS.**—The officers of the state system of public K-12 and Florida College System institution education shall be the Commissioner of Education and the members of the State Board of Education; for each district school system, the officers shall be the district school superintendent and members of the district school board; and for each Florida College System institution, the officers shall be the Florida College System institution president and members of the Florida College System institution board of trustees.

(2) **INSTRUCTIONAL PERSONNEL.**—“Instructional personnel” means any K-12 staff member whose function includes the provision of direct instructional services to students. Instructional personnel also includes K-12 personnel whose functions provide direct support in the learning process of students. Included in the classification of instructional personnel are the following K-12 personnel:

(a) **Classroom teachers.**—Classroom teachers are staff members assigned the professional activity of instructing students in courses in classroom situations, including basic instruction, exceptional student education, career education, and adult education, including substitute teachers.

(b) **Student personnel services.**—Student personnel services include staff members responsible for: advising students with regard to their abilities and aptitudes, educational and occupational opportunities, and personal and social adjustments; providing placement services; performing educational evaluations; and similar functions. Included in this classification are certified school counselors, social workers, career specialists, and school psychologists.

(c) **Librarians/media specialists.**—Librarians/media specialists are staff members responsible for providing school library media services. These employees are responsible for evaluating, selecting, organizing, and managing media and technology resources, equipment, and related systems; facilitating access to information resources beyond the school; working with teachers to make resources available in the instructional programs; assisting teachers and students in media productions; and instructing students in the location and use of information resources.

(d) **Other instructional staff.**—Other instructional staff are staff members who are part of the instructional staff but are not classified in one of the categories specified in paragraphs (a)-(c). Included in this classification are primary specialists, learning resource specialists, instructional trainers, adjunct educators certified pursuant to s. [1012.57](#), and similar positions.

(e) **Education paraprofessionals.**—Education paraprofessionals are individuals who are under the direct supervision of an instructional staff member, aiding the instructional process. Included in this classification are classroom paraprofessionals in regular instruction, exceptional education paraprofessionals, career education paraprofessionals, adult education paraprofessionals, library paraprofessionals, physical education and playground paraprofessionals, and other school-level paraprofessionals.

(3) **ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL.**—“Administrative personnel” includes K-12 personnel who perform management activities such as developing broad policies for the school district and executing those policies through the direction of personnel at all levels within the district. Administrative personnel are generally high-level, responsible personnel who have been assigned the responsibilities of systemwide or schoolwide functions, such as district school superintendents, assistant superintendents, deputy superintendents, school principals,

assistant principals, career center directors, and others who perform management activities. Broad classifications of K-12 administrative personnel are as follows:

(a) *District-based instructional administrators.*—Included in this classification are persons with district-level administrative or policymaking duties who have broad authority for management policies and general school district operations related to the instructional program. Such personnel often report directly to the district school superintendent and supervise other administrative employees. This classification includes assistant, associate, or deputy superintendents and directors of major instructional areas, such as curriculum, federal programs such as Title I, specialized instructional program areas such as exceptional student education, career education, and similar areas.

(b) *District-based noninstructional administrators.*—Included in this classification are persons with district-level administrative or policymaking duties who have broad authority for management policies and general school district operations related to the noninstructional program. Such personnel often report directly to the district school superintendent and supervise other administrative employees. This classification includes assistant, associate, or deputy superintendents and directors of major noninstructional areas, such as personnel, construction, facilities, transportation, data processing, and finance.

(c) *School administrators.*—Included in this classification are:

1. School principals or school directors who are 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 classification also includes career center directors.

2. Assistant principals who are staff members assisting the administrative head of the school. This classification also includes assistant principals for curriculum and administration.

(4) **YEAR OF SERVICE.**—The minimum time which may be recognized in administering K-12 education, not including retirement, as a year of service by a school employee shall be full-time actual service; and, beginning July 1963, such service shall also include sick leave and holidays for which compensation was received but shall exclude all other types of leave and holidays for a total of more than one-half of the number of days required for the normal contractual period of service for the position held, which shall be 196 days or longer, or the minimum required for the district to participate in the Florida Education Finance Program in the year service was rendered, or the equivalent for service performed on a daily or hourly basis; provided, further, that absence from duty after the date of beginning service shall be covered by leave duly authorized and granted; further, the school board shall have authority to establish a different minimum for local district school purposes.

(5) **SCHOOL VOLUNTEER.**—A K-12 school volunteer is any nonpaid person who may be appointed by a district school board or its designee. School volunteers may include, but may not be limited to, parents, senior citizens, students, and others who assist the teacher or other members of the school staff.

(6) **EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT EMPLOYEES.**—“Educational support employees” means K-12 employees whose job functions are neither administrative nor instructional, yet whose work supports the educational process.

(a) Other professional staff or nonadministrative/noninstructional employees are staff members who perform professional job functions which are nonadministrative/noninstructional in nature and who are not otherwise classified in this section. Included in this classification are employees such as doctors, nurses, attorneys, certified public accountants, and others appropriate to the classification.

(b) Technicians are individuals whose occupations require a combination of knowledge and manual skill which can be obtained through about 2 years of post-high school education, such as is offered in many career centers and Florida College System institutions, or through equivalent on-the-job training.

(c) Clerical/secretarial workers are individuals whose job requires skills and training in clerical-type work, including activities such as preparing, transcribing, systematizing, or preserving written communications and reports or operating equipment performing those functions. Included in this classification are secretaries, bookkeepers, messengers, and office machine operators.

(d) Skilled crafts workers are individuals who perform jobs which require special manual skill and a thorough and comprehensive knowledge of the processes involved in the work which is acquired through on-the-job training

and experience or through apprenticeship or other formal training programs. Lead workers for the various skilled crafts areas shall be included in this classification.

(e) Service workers are staff members performing a service for which there are no formal qualifications, including those responsible for: cleaning the buildings, school plants, or supporting facilities; maintenance and operation of such equipment as heating and ventilation systems; preserving the security of school property; and keeping the school plant safe for occupancy and use. Lead workers in the various service areas shall be included in this broad classification.

(7) MANAGERS.—“Managers” includes those K-12 staff members who perform managerial and supervisory functions while usually also performing general operations functions. Managers may be either instructional or noninstructional in their responsibility. They may direct employees’ work, plan the work schedule, control the flow and distribution of work or materials, train employees, handle complaints, authorize payments, and appraise productivity and efficiency of employees. This classification includes coordinators and supervisors working under the general direction of those staff identified as district-based instructional or noninstructional administrators.

History.—s. 689, ch. 2002-387; s. 6, ch. 2004-295; ss. 6, 131, ch. 2004-357; s. 161, ch. 2007-217; s. 182, ch. 2011-5; s. 12, ch. 2013-89.

Select Year:

The 2017 Florida Statutes

[Title XLVIII](#)
K-20 EDUCATION CODE

[Chapter 1012](#)
PERSONNEL

[View Entire Chapter](#)

1012.731 The Florida Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program.—

(1) The Legislature recognizes that, second only to parents, teachers play the most critical role within schools in preparing students to achieve a high level of academic performance. The Legislature further recognizes that research has linked student outcomes to a teacher's own academic achievement. Therefore, it is the intent of the Legislature to designate teachers who have achieved high academic standards during their own education as Florida's best and brightest teacher scholars.

(2) There is created the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program to be administered by the Department of Education. The scholarship program shall provide categorical funding for scholarships to be awarded to classroom teachers, as defined in s. [1012.01\(2\)\(a\)](#), who have demonstrated a high level of academic achievement.

(3)(a) To be eligible for a scholarship in the amount of \$6,000, a classroom teacher must:

1. Have achieved a composite score at or above the 80th percentile on either the SAT or the ACT based on the National Percentile Ranks in effect when the classroom teacher took the assessment and have been evaluated as highly effective pursuant to s. [1012.34](#) in the school year immediately preceding the year in which the scholarship will be awarded, unless the classroom teacher is newly hired by the district school board and has not been evaluated pursuant to s. [1012.34](#).

2. Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, have achieved a composite score at or above the 77th percentile or, if the classroom teacher graduated cum laude or higher with a baccalaureate degree, the 71st percentile on either the SAT, ACT, GRE, LSAT, GMAT, or MCAT based on the National Percentile Ranks in effect when the classroom teacher took the assessment; and have been evaluated as highly effective pursuant to s. [1012.34](#), or have been evaluated as highly effective based on a commissioner-approved student learning growth formula pursuant to s. [1012.34\(8\)](#), in the school year immediately preceding the year in which the scholarship will be awarded, unless the classroom teacher is newly hired by the district school board and has not been evaluated pursuant to s. [1012.34](#).

(b) In order to demonstrate eligibility for an award, an eligible classroom teacher must submit to the school district, no later than November 1, an official record of his or her qualifying assessment score and, beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, an official transcript demonstrating that he or she graduated cum laude or higher with a baccalaureate degree, if applicable. Once a classroom teacher is deemed eligible by the school district, the teacher shall remain eligible as long as he or she remains employed by the school district as a classroom teacher at the time of the award and receives an annual performance evaluation rating of highly effective pursuant to s. [1012.34](#) or is evaluated as highly effective based on a commissioner-approved student learning growth formula pursuant to s. [1012.34\(8\)](#) for the 2019-2020 school year or thereafter.

(c) Notwithstanding the requirements of this subsection, for the 2017-2018, 2018-2019, and 2019-2020 school years, any classroom teacher who:

1. Was evaluated as highly effective pursuant to s. [1012.34](#) in the school year immediately preceding the year in which the scholarship will be awarded shall receive a scholarship of \$1200, including a classroom teacher who received an award pursuant to paragraph (a).

2. Was evaluated as effective pursuant to s. [1012.34](#) in the school year immediately preceding the year in which the scholarship will be awarded a scholarship of up to \$800. If the number of eligible classroom teachers under this subparagraph exceeds the total allocation, the department shall prorate the per-teacher scholarship amount.

This paragraph expires July 1, 2020.

(4) Annually, by December 1, each school district shall submit to the department:

(a) The number of eligible classroom teachers who qualify for the scholarship.

(b) The name and master school identification number (MSID) of each school in the district to which an eligible classroom teacher is assigned.

(c) The name of the school principal of each eligible classroom teacher's school if he or she has served as the school's principal for at least 2 consecutive school years including the current school year.

(5) Annually, by February 1, the department shall disburse scholarship funds to each school district for each eligible classroom teacher to receive a scholarship in accordance with this section.

(6) Annually, by April 1, each school district shall award the scholarship to each eligible classroom teacher.

(7) For purposes of this section, the term "school district" includes the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind and charter school governing boards.

History.—s. 25, ch. 2016-62; s. 46, ch. 2017-116.