

Best & Brightest Teacher and Principal Program 2019-2020

1. Recruitment Award:

- a. Any newly hired full-time classroom teacher who meets the criteria identified in law, subject to the definitions below, shall be eligible for a one-time recruitment award provided that he/she:
 - i. Meets the definition of content expert, based on the criteria established by the Florida Department of Education, in the areas of math, science, computer science, reading, or civics; and
 - ii. Was hired between the dates July 1, 2019 and January 3, 2020 for the 2019-2020 school year; and
 - iii. Was employed continuously in a full-time classroom teacher position in Walton County School District through the end of the 2019-2020 school year; and
 - iv. Completed the required district application for the award and provided all supporting documentation requested by the District to verify eligibility for the award by the submission deadline of Friday, May 15, 2020.
- b. The Recruitment Award shall be \$2,500.00.
- c. Walton County School District is authorized to prorate awards if the funds allocated to the district are insufficient to cover the awards.

2. Retention Award:

- a. An annual retention award to classroom teachers who:
 - i. Received a summative evaluation rating of “highly effective” or “effective” pursuant to Florida Statute 1012.34 for the preceding school year; and
 - ii. Were full-time teachers at the same eligible school for 2 consecutive years, including the current year, that is identified by the Department of Education as a qualifying school meeting the average of 3 percentage points’ growth requirement; and
 - iii. Remain employed as a full-time classroom teacher at the same eligible school through the end of the 2019-20 school year.
- b. The award amount is \$2,500.00 for highly effective teachers and \$1,000.00 for effective teachers.
- c. Walton County School District is authorized to prorate awards if the funds allocated to the district are insufficient to cover the awards.

3. Recognition Award:

- a. An annual recognition award to instructional personnel who:
 - i. Received a summative evaluation rating of “highly effective” or “effective” from a Florida school district the preceding year; and
 - ii. Were selected by his or her school principal to receive the award, based on performance criteria and policies adopted by the District; and
 - iii. For Newly Hired Instructional Personnel: Completed the District required application for the award and provided any supporting documentation identified by the District to verify eligibility for the award by the designated submission deadline of Friday, May 15, 2020; and
 - iv. Are employed by Walton County School District through the end of the 2019-20 school year.
- b. The amount of the recognition award will be calculated by determining the remaining funds after recruitment, retention and principal awards have been deducted and divide that amount by number of eligible instructional staff remaining in the district.

4. Principal Award:

- a. An annual retention award to school principals who:
 - i. Are currently serving as the school principal at a school that is identified by the Department of Education as a qualifying school that 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
 - ii. Served as the school principal at the same school for 4 consecutive school years, including the current school year; and
 - iii. Remain employed as the school principal at that school through the end of the 2019-20 school year.
- b. The Principal Award shall be \$5,000.00.
- c. Walton County School District is authorized to prorate awards if the funds allocated to the district are insufficient to cover the awards.

Definitions:

1. Classroom teacher – as defined in Florida Statute 1012.01(2)(a) include K-12 teachers that are assigned the professional activity of instructing students in courses in the classroom. By law it does not include teachers exclusively serving students in Pre-K or post-secondary programs.
2. Content expert –
 - a. For the areas of mathematics, science, or computer science: Defined in State Board of Education Rule 6AER19-01 as a classroom teacher who has either:
 - i. Earned at least a master's degree in mathematics, science, or computer science from an institution accredited by the United States Department of education; or
 - ii. Earned at least a bachelor's degree in the areas of mathematics, science or computer science from an institution accredited by the United States Department of Education and who has at least five (5) years' teaching experience in the associated subject area or at least five (5) years' work experience in the associated subject area; or
 - iii. Holds a valid Florida educator's certificate in a subject area to be considered in-field for the areas of mathematics, science or computer science.
 - b. For the area of civics, a classroom teacher who has either:
 - i. Earned at least a master's degree in political science, American history, social studies, or social science from an institution accredited by the United States Department of Education; or
 - ii. Earned at least a bachelor's degree in political science, American history, social studies, or social science from an institution accredited by the United States Department of Education and who has at least five (5) years' teaching experience in the associated subject area at or at least five (5) years' work experience in the associated subject area.
 - iii. Holds a valid Florida educator's certificate in a subject area to be considered in-field for the area of civics.
 - c. For the area of reading, a classroom teacher who has either:
 - i. Earned at least a master's degree in English, English literature, reading, or literacy instruction from an institution accredited by the United States Department of Education; or
 - ii. Earned at least a bachelor's degree in English, English literature, reading, or literacy instruction from an institution accredited by the United States Department of Education and who has at least five (5) years' teaching experience in English language arts or reading.
 - iii. Holds a valid Florida educator's certificate in a subject area to be considered in-field for the area of reading.

3. Instructional Personnel – as 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.
4. Newly Hired – Initial employment as a classroom teacher in Walton County between the dates of July 1, 2019 and January 3, 2020 and have not received a prior recruitment award in Walton County School District.
5. Performance Criteria – Highly effective or effective overall summative rating pursuant to Florida Statute 1012.34 for the school year immediately preceding the award year.
6. 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.
7. Qualifying School – A school that has improved an average of 3 percentage points or more over the past 3 years. Eligible schools are identified by the Florida Department of Education. This list may be found at <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/5306/urlt/bestandbrightest-rp.xls>.
8. 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. To determine a year of service, Walton County School Board Policy 6.13* Section I states:

The minimum time which may be recognized as a year of service for contractual purposes shall be full time actual service rendered under contract for more than one-half (½) of the number of days or more than one-half (½) the number of total hours required for the normal contractual period of service for the position held. In determining such service, sick leave and holidays for which the employee received compensation shall be counted, but all other types of leave and holidays shall be excluded.

Award Amounts:

The award amounts are 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.

Eligibility Decisions:

An application and/or supporting documentation are required for the Recruitment Award and the Recognition Award for newly hired personnel. 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. Decisions will be considered final.

Award Eligibility:

Employees will receive only one award. Employees that meet the criteria for multiple awards will receive the award with the highest monetary value.