Florida’s Best and Brightest Scholarship Program – Q & A

1. What is Florida’s Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program?
The State of Florida created the Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program to attract and retain high academic achievers in the teaching profession. This is a State funded opportunity. Broward County Public Schools is not responsible for funding or program parameters.

2. Who is eligible to apply?
- A classroom teacher who scored at or above the 80th percentile on either the SAT (including both critical reading and math scores) or the ACT (a composite score) based on the National Rank in effect at the time the classroom teacher took the assessment; and
- A classroom teacher evaluated as HIGHLY EFFECTIVE pursuant to section F.S. 1012.34. Teachers employed as a classroom teacher for the District during the 2015-16 school year will not need to submit evaluation data. Talent Acquisition & Operations (Instructional) Department will secure required documentation from the District’s Employee Evaluation Department to determine eligibility. **NOTE:** Classroom teachers employed at another Florida school district or Florida charter school in 2015-16 will need to provide an official evaluation document showing their final rating as HIGHLY EFFECTIVE.
- Classroom teachers new to the profession for the 2016-17 school year (or those hired in 2015-16 who did not receive an evaluation) only need the exam showing they scored at or above the 80th percentile.

3. How is a classroom teacher defined?
A classroom teacher is defined under F.S. 1012.01(2)(a) as “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.”

4. I applied for the scholarship last year and was approved. Do I have to reapply?
No. You do not need to reapply. The district will determine if you meet the criteria this year once we obtain your overall evaluation. At that time you will be notified of your status.

5. I applied for the scholarship last year but my scores were too low. Can I reapply?
Yes you can reapply. Submit your application and acceptable scores to Talent Acquisition & Operations (Instructional) by the deadline date of November 1, 2016. http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/teacher/current/forms.html.

6. I applied for the scholarship last year but was not approved because I did not receive an overall HIGHLY EFFECTIVE evaluation. Do I have to reapply?
No. You do not need to reapply. The district will determine if you meet the criteria this year once we obtain your overall evaluation. At that time you will be notified of your status.

7. Can a substitute teacher or temporary hourly teacher apply?
No. Substitute teachers and temporary hourly teachers are not eligible to apply and cannot qualify.

8. What do I need to do before I apply for the “Best and Brightest Scholarship” award?
Obtain an official record of your SAT or ACT scores from the testing agency. If you were employed as a classroom teacher at another Florida school district or Florida charter school in 2015-16, provide an official evaluation document showing your final overall rating as HIGHLY EFFECTIVE. Applications submitted without official scores will not be considered as completed applications. Classroom teachers with incomplete applications will not be eligible for the award.

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9. **I have my exam scores. How do I apply?**
   Complete the Best and Brightest Scholarship Application, available for download from the Talent Acquisition & Operations (Instructional) website at [www.browardschools.com/teacher](http://www.browardschools.com/teacher). Select Current Teacher/Sub, Instructional Employee Forms and Info, and submit the completed application with an official record of your SAT or ACT scores indicating at or above the 80th percentile to Talent Acquisition & Operations (Instructional) on or before the State’s deadline of November 1, 2016.

10. **How do I obtain an original replacement SAT score or register to retake the test?**
    Access the College Board website at [https://www.collegeboard.org/](https://www.collegeboard.org/).

11. **How do I obtain an original replacement score for the ACT or register to retake the test?**
    Go to [www.actstudent.org/pdf/asrform.pdf](http://www.actstudent.org/pdf/asrform.pdf) or call 319-337-1270.

12. **I took the ACT and received my official score documentation. How can I determine my percentile score?**
    The minimum composite scores that were at or above the 80th percentile at the time of testing are on the Talent Acquisition & Operations (Instructional) website at [www.browardschools.com/teacher](http://www.browardschools.com/teacher). Select Current Teacher/Sub, Instructional Employee Forms and Info, and click on the link for Florida Best & Brightest ACT Percentile Info.

13. **I took the SAT and received my official score documentation. How can I find out if my scores were at or above the 80th percentile based on the rank in effect when I took the test?**
    The minimum scores required for both the Verbal/Critical Reading and Math by administration date are on the Talent Acquisition & Operations (Instructional) website at [www.browardschools.com/teacher](http://www.browardschools.com/teacher). Select Current Teacher/Sub, Instructional Employee Forms and Info, and click on the link for Florida Best & Brightest SAT Percentiles.

14. **How do I get my 2015-16 overall evaluation?**
    If you worked for the District during the 2015-16 school year, no action is required by you. The Employee Evaluations Department will provide your final overall evaluation rating to the Talent Acquisition & Operations (Instructional) Department. If you worked for another Florida public school district or a Florida Charter School during the 2015-16 school year, you will need to provide an official evaluation document showing your final rating as HIGHLY EFFECTIVE.

15. **I was a first year classroom teacher for the 2015-16 school year and did not receive an overall evaluation. Am I eligible to apply?**
    Yes. As long as you have official score documentation showing that you scored at or above the 80th percentile based on the rank in effect when you took the exam.

16. **I am in my very first year in the teaching profession so I never received an evaluation. How do I qualify?**
    If you are a classroom teacher new to the teaching profession for the 2016-17 school year, you are a first-year teacher who has not been evaluated pursuant to section 1012.34. To qualify for the award, you must have scored at or above the 80th percentile on either the SAT (including both critical reading and math scores) or the ACT (a composite score) based on the National Rank in effect at the time you took the assessment. No overall evaluation is needed.

17. **I was a classroom teacher for the 2015-16 school year and expect to receive a HIGHLY EFFECTIVE overall evaluation. What if I no longer work for the District or am no longer a classroom teacher? Am I eligible to apply?**
    No. You must be a classroom teacher with the District at the time of the submittal deadline of November 1, 2016.
18. I was a classroom teacher for the 2015-16 school year and expect to receive a HIGHLY EFFECTIVE overall evaluation, but I am on a Board Approved leave for the 2016-17 school year. Am I eligible?
Yes. You are eligible to apply because you are on an approved leave from a classroom position. This does not include Charter school leave. If you are on leave from the District and are working at a Charter school, please see question #23 for instructions.

19. I received a "HIGHLY EFFECTIVE" rating in instructional practice and an "EFFECTIVE" in deliberate practice. Do I qualify for the Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program?
The evaluation rating is based on your 2015-16 overall evaluation, which you have not yet received. The District is waiting for the Student Performance scores that the State will provide so that the final overall evaluations can be completed.

20. When is the final deadline date for me to submit by application for this award?
District classroom teachers must submit their application, including their official test score records and/or final evaluation (if from another FL district or FL charter school), no later than the State’s November 1, 2016, deadline. Applications must be submitted to the District’s Talent Acquisition & Operations (Instructional) office (mailing address is at the top of the Application form).

21. When will the bonus be paid?
The bonus will be paid by April 1, 2017, pending receipt of the funds from the State.

22. If I qualify for the award, how will I know how much I will receive? Will it be in my regular payroll check or distributed to me as a separate check?
The State has appropriated approximately $49 million for these awards this year. The amount of the awards will be based upon the final number of recipients. When the final number of recipients is determined State-wide, the State will announce the individual award amount. By April 1, 2017, pending receipt of the funds from the State, your regular paycheck will list this award amount as a separate pay line item. All payments from this program will be subject to payroll and income tax withholdings.

23. Is this opportunity for classroom teachers who currently work at a Charter school?
Yes. However, charter school teachers must apply directly to their Charter School by the State’s deadline. Contact your Charter School Administration for further information.

24. When and how will I know if I qualify for the scholarship award?
Teachers will be notified via email by December 16, 2016, of his/her final award status.

25. Who do I contact if I have more questions?
Please email your questions to CertificationRequests@browardschools.com. Insert Best and Brightest in the subject line.