Florida’s Best and Brightest Scholarship Program
Questions & Answers

Florida’s Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program rewards Classroom Teachers who have been evaluated as Highly Effective and who have earned college entrance scores on the SAT or ACT at or above the 80th percentile. This is a state-funded opportunity. St. Lucie Public Schools is not responsible for funding or program parameters.

1. Who is eligible?

   a. An active Classroom Teacher who received a “Highly Effective” rating on his/her 2015-2016 final evaluation as a Classroom Teacher, who is an active classroom teacher on December 1, 2017, and earned a score on the SAT (Critical Reading AND Mathematics) or ACT that was at or above the 80th percentile at the time taken.

   b. An active Classroom Teacher whose first year of teaching is 2016-2017 or 2017-2018 and who is an active classroom teacher on December 1, 2017. Since first year teachers have no prior rating, they are only required to have earned a score on the SAT (Critical Reading AND Mathematics) or ACT that is at or above the 80th percentile at the time taken.

   c. An active Classroom Teacher who received a “Highly Effective” rating on his/her 2015-2016 final evaluation and who is an active classroom teacher on December 1, 2017 and was a recipient of the Florida’s Best and Brightest Scholarship Program in the previous year.

2. Which teachers are considered classroom teachers that could be eligible for the scholarship bonus?

   Eligible Classroom Teachers are defined in s. 1012.01(2)(a) F.S.:

   (a) 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.

3. Are there teachers who are not eligible to receive the Scholarship Program Bonus?

   According to Florida Law teachers who are not eligible include those teachers that provide student personnel services, librarians/media specialists and other instructional staff as defined in s. 1012.01(2)(b)-(d) F.S.:

   (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.

4. Do I need to apply again if I received the Best and Brightest Scholarship last year?

If you received the scholarship as an employee in St. Lucie Public Schools and continue to meet the eligibility requirements, you do not need to reapply for the scholarship.

If you received the scholarship while employed in another district, you will need to apply for the scholarship with St. Lucie Public Schools.

5. For what year must I have received a Final Evaluation (Instructional Practice + Student Growth) rating of Highly Effective?

2015-2016

6. What if I am a new Classroom Teacher with no prior final evaluation rating?

New teachers are eligible if they have a qualifying SAT or ACT score.

7. If I was on approved leave during the 2015-2016 school year and did not receive a final evaluation am I still eligible?

Yes. The most recent final evaluation will be used.

8. How much is the scholarship award?

Teachers can receive up to $6,000. However, if the number of eligible teachers statewide causes bonuses to exceed the total amount of the legislative appropriation, the DOE will prorate the per-teacher scholarship amount. The total amount received is determined by the state.

9. What must I do?

You must submit your completed Florida’s Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Application Form along with documentation of your College Board (SAT) or ACT score. All documentation is due to the SLPS Human Resources Department by December 1, 2017.

10. What if I don’t have a percentile ranking on my SAT/ACT document?

Not all score documents will have the corresponding percentile for the year taken. The Florida Department of Education has provided percentile scores for both SAT and ACT which are posted on the District’s Best and Brightest webpage:

http://www.stlucie.k12.fl.us/pdf/employees/SAT-Percentiles.pdf
11. What if I have a 2015-2016 classroom teacher final evaluation from SLPS in my personnel file. Do I need to resubmit?

You do not need to submit any evaluation data.

12. What if I have a 2015-2016 classroom teacher final evaluation from another public school district in Florida?

If you worked at another School District or Charter School as a Classroom Teacher in Florida in 2015-2016, then you must provide SLPS with an official evaluation document that shows your final rating as Highly Effective as a Classroom Teacher. The following form may be used: http://www.stlucie.k12.fl.us/pdf/forms/PER0201.pdf.

13. What score do I need to qualify?

SAT: You need scores that were at or above the 80th percentile in BOTH Critical Reading and Mathematics in the year you took the exam. You are responsible for retrieving your percentile score and submitting it to the District. To obtain your percentile score, visit https://sat.collegeboard.org/scores/send-old-sat-scores

ACT: You need a composite score that was at or above the 80th percentile in the year you took the exam. You are responsible for retrieving your percentile score and submitting it to the District. To obtain your percentile score, visit http://www.actstudent.org/scores/send/

14. What is the process for verification, notification and payment of eligible classroom teachers?

The process that the District will use is outlined in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Category</th>
<th>New Classroom Teacher in SLPS</th>
<th>Experienced Classroom Teacher in Florida and new to SLPS</th>
<th>Experienced Classroom Teacher outside of Florida and new to SLPS</th>
<th>Current Classroom Teacher in SLPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Steps</strong></td>
<td><strong>Timeline</strong></td>
<td><strong>A</strong></td>
<td><strong>B</strong></td>
<td><strong>C</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1: Submission</td>
<td>Due to HR by December 1, 2017</td>
<td>Submit Official ACT or SAT score to Human Resources by December 1, 2017</td>
<td>Submit Official ACT or SAT score to Human Resources by December 1, 2017 AND 2015-2016 final evaluation</td>
<td>Submit Official ACT or SAT score to Human Resources by December 1, 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Steps

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>1: Verification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Classroom Teacher in SLPS</td>
<td></td>
<td>Experienced Classroom Teacher in Florida and new to SLPS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2: Verification</td>
<td>Completed by Dec. 07, 2017</td>
<td>Human Resources Department verifies 80+ percentile score.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3: Notification</td>
<td>Completed by Dec. 08, 2017</td>
<td>Human Resources Department notifies teacher of eligibility or ineligibility after review of documentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5: Transmission to FDOE</td>
<td>Completed by Jan. 2, 2018</td>
<td>SLPS transmits data for eligible teachers to FDOE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Payment</td>
<td>Completed by April 1, 2018</td>
<td>FDOE distributes funds to eligible teachers. Final check amount determined by state.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. **I was a classroom teacher in 2015-2016 and received a “highly effective” rating but I am now an administrator in the district. Am I eligible to receive the scholarship bonus?**

No. You must be an active classroom teacher in SLPS as of December 1, 2017.

16. **I was a classroom teacher in 2015-2016 and received a “highly effective” rating but I will be retired on December 1, 2017. Am I eligible to receive the scholarship bonus?**

No. You must be an active classroom teacher in SLPS as of December 1, 2017.

17. **I was a classroom teacher in 2015-2016 and received a “highly effective” rating but I am now in a non-classroom teaching position. Am I eligible to receive the scholarship bonus?**

No. You must be an active classroom teacher in SLPS as of December 1, 2017.
18. **Must I be employed by the district at the time of payout?**

Yes.

19. **I was a classroom teacher in 2015-2016 and received a “highly effective” rating but I am now on approved leave. Am I eligible to receive the scholarship?**

If you were an active classroom teacher as of December 1, submitted the required documentation verifying eligibility by December 1, but subsequently went on extended leave you will receive the scholarship bonus if eligible.

20. **How do I submit my documentation?**

All documentation must be submitted through either:

a. Interoffice mail to: Marla Grant, Director of Human Resources
   Parkway Elementary School

b. U.S. Mail to: Marla Grant, Director of Human Resources
   Parkway Elementary School
   7000 NW Selvitz Road
   Port St. Lucie, FL 34983

c. E-mail to: marla.grant@stlucieschools.org

Documentation sent via fax will not be accepted.

21. **Will I be taxed on this bonus?**

All payments to teachers from this program are considered compensation and are subject to the appropriate payroll and income tax withholdings per the IRS.

22. **I was in a non-classroom teacher position in 2015-2016, but I am now an active classroom teacher. Am I eligible to receive the scholarship?**

Yes, if you are an active classroom teacher as of December 1, 2017 and meet the evaluation and SAT/ACT score requirements.

23. **Questions:**

If you have additional questions, please email Marla Grant, Director of Human Resources at marla.grant@stlucieschools.org.