



## **DROP Extension for Instructional Personnel**

The School Board of St. Lucie County is implementing a DROP extension procedure for qualified instructional personnel. This process is being done in an effort to retain qualified instructional personnel based on F.S. 1012(2)(a)-(d) (included below) and to allow those eligible employees an opportunity to accumulate retirement benefits into the FRS Trust Fund beyond the normal 60 month period. This extension of the Deferred Retirement Option Program (DROP) period is permitted at the employee's request and District's concurrence as allowed by Florida Statute 121.091(13). Instructional personnel interested in the DROP extension must complete and submit the form below to their principal

(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."

**Procedure:**

- 1) The employee must complete the St. Lucie Public School DROP extension request and submit it to their principal a minimum of forty-five (45) working days prior to the end of their current DROP end date.
- 2) Principals will review the employee's DROP extension form and indicate if they recommend the employee for DROP extension and forward the form to the Human Resources Department (HR) within 10 working days of receipt or by April 15th.
- 3) HR will verify eligibility and notify the employee in writing within 10 working days of the approval or denial of the extension request.
- 4) Along with approval notification the HR department will provide recommended eligible employees an Extension of Deferred Retirement Option Program form (DP-EXT). The DP-EXT form must be signed in the presence of a Notary and be returned to the HR department within five (5) working days.
- 5) DROP may be extended on an annually renewal basis for up to 36 months. DROP extension participation must terminate at the end of a school year, which may limit being extended for a full 36 calendar months depending on when your 60-month DROP participation ends. (House Bill 495: Effective 7/1/2018)
- 6) If a position is not granted at their current location, employees seeking an extension may be considered for a position at a location designated by the District. The employee has the right to accept or to reject that position to extend their DROP participation.
- 7) HR will submit the completed and signed DP-EXT application to the Florida Retirement System Pension Plan prior to the end of the normal DROP termination date.

