

2016 – 2017 BEST & BRIGHTEST Teacher Scholarship Program

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

This is a State funded opportunity. Osceola District Schools is not responsible for funding or program parameters.

The State of Florida created the new Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program to attract and retain high academic achievers in the teaching profession. The following questions and answers (Q & A) are provided in sequential order to best assist you in understanding the program's parameters and provisions. You are encouraged to read through all of the questions to facilitate your full understanding of the program. However, if your question is specific, you may click on the applicable question link below to quickly navigate to the question response.

Please note, there are questions where we are seeking clarification and further guidance from the State. As such information is received, this Q & A guidance will be updated accordingly. *(updated August 2016)*

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2. [What is the eligibility criteria for the Best and Brightest Scholarship award?](#)
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10. [I work as a classroom teacher for the School District of Osceola County but I have not received my final evaluation scores because the District is waiting Student Growth results. Can I submit my ACT and SAT score results and Best and Brightest application while I await my Classroom Teacher Evaluation results?](#)
11. [I am a new classroom teacher to this District for fiscal year 2017 but I also taught last year and received an evaluation rating in another K-12 District. How may I qualify for the scholarship award?](#)

12. I have my official ACT/SAT score results but my former school district has not finalized my 2015-2016 Classroom Teacher Evaluation. Can I submit my ACT and SAT score results and Best & Brightest application while I await my Classroom Teacher Evaluation results?
13. 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?
14. If I did not take or do not have SAT or ACT scores, can I take the test now in order to qualify?
15. When does my application need to be completed by?
16. I work at a Charter school. How do I apply for the scholarship award?
17. I have been awarded the Best & Brightest scholarship prior to this school year. Am I eligible again this year? Do I need to resubmit an application and score results?
18. Who do I contact if I have more questions?
19. I took the ACT and received my official score documentation. Why do I not see my percentile score?

1. What is the Florida 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. The School District of Osceola County is not responsible for funding or program parameters.

2. What is the eligibility criteria for the Best and Brightest Scholarship award?

The Florida Department of Education has clarified eligibility criteria such that teachers who may apply for the award are defined under 1012.01(2)(a), F.S.: **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.

To be eligible:

- ✓ A classroom teacher must have scored at or above the 80th percentile on either the SAT (including both critical reading and math scores during the same administration) or the ACT (a composite score) based on the percentile rankings in effect at the time the classroom teacher took the assessment, **AND**
- ✓ Must have been evaluated as *Highly Effective* pursuant to section 1012.34, F.S. for the 2015-2016 fiscal school year, **OR**
- ✓ If the classroom teacher is a newly hired classroom teacher who has not been evaluated pursuant to section 1012.34, F.S., she/he 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 percentile rankings in effect at the time the classroom teacher took the assessment.

Instructional Personnel that are not included in 1012.01(2)(a), F.S., and therefore are **NOT** eligible to apply are the following:

1012.01(2)(b), F.S.: **Student personnel services**. – Included in this classification are certified school counselors, social workers, career specialists, and school psychologists.

1012.01(2)(c), F.S.: **Librarians/media specialists**.

1012.01(2)(d), F.S.: **Other instructional staff**. – These are instructional staff that are not classified in the categories specified in Florida Statutes paragraphs (a)–(c) above. Included in this classification are primary specialists, learning resource specialists, instructional trainers, adjunct educators, and similar positions.

3. I am in my very first year in the teaching profession so I have never received an evaluation. How may I qualify for the award?

If you are new to the teaching profession in the 2016-2017 school year, you are considered a newly hired classroom teacher who has not been evaluated pursuant to section 1012.34, F.S. 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 percentile rankings in effect at the time you took the assessment.

4. I am a substitute teacher. Can I apply and qualify for the award?

No, substitute teachers are not eligible to apply and cannot qualify.

5. What do I need to do before I apply for the Best and Brightest Scholarship award?

You need to obtain an official record of your SAT or ACT scores from the testing agency. Official documentation of your SAT or ACT score(s) must be submitted as part of your application process. Applications that are submitted without official scores will not be considered as completed applications. Classroom teachers with incomplete applications will not be eligible for the award. Examples of official documentation are:

- ◆ Official score reports from the issuing testing agency (ACT, College Board/SAT)
- ◆ Official college or high school transcripts that clearly identify qualifying scores and test administration dates.

If you do not have an official record of your score(s) from the testing agency, you may contact the testing administrator to obtain an official copy. For **SAT** test scores, go to the College Board website at: <https://sat.collegeboard.org/scores/send-old-sat-scores> or call 866-756-7346.

For **ACT** test scores, complete the online order form via: <http://act.org/aap/pdf/asrform.pdf>, or call 319-337-1270 to place an archived score report request. You can also request your ACT score online at: www.actstudent.org.

Whether you access the SAT or ACT testing agency, you must SEND THE SCORES TO YOURSELF!

6. I have my scores. How do I apply for the scholarship award?

In order to demonstrate eligibility for an award, a classroom teacher must complete the district's Best and Brightest Scholarship Program application along with the official score report **no later than November 1, 2016**. An official record of his/her SAT or ACT score(s) indicating at or above the 80th percentile, based upon the percentile rankings in effect at the time the assessment was taken, **must** be attached and submitted to complete the application process. Applications submitted without official score(s) documentation will not be considered complete. A classroom teacher that does not submit an official score record will be notified via District email that his/her application is incomplete and he/she may resubmit their official record up through the State's deadline of November 1, 2016.

7. How do I submit the application and test scores to the district?

It is recommended that the Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship application along with original, official documentation of your SAT or ACT score(s) be hand delivered to ensure the application and official test records have been received by the correct office and prior to the State deadline of November 1st.

If the applicant chooses to utilize another method of delivery such as U.S. Postal Service, or the District courier service, it will be the responsibility of the applicant to follow-up with the District to ensure receipt. Follow-up by the applicant should occur within three days of sending out documents. If sent by U.S. Postal Service, or District courier service, applicants should allocate a sufficient amount of time to ensure it is received prior to the State's deadline.

Documents sent by email or fax **are not** an acceptable method of delivery and **will not** be considered in the application process. The school district will provide certification to the applicant on the type of documentation received. The School District of Osceola County will not be responsible for missing documentation or late submission regardless of delivery method.

Documentation should be delivered to:

Thomas Phelps
Deputy Superintendent of Human Services
Email: Bestandbrightest@osceola.k12.fl.us
Office Location:
Human Resources
799 Bill Beck Blvd, Building 3
Kissimmee, FL 34744

8. When and how will I know if I qualify for the scholarship award?

Once you submit your application, including attaching your official score(s) documentation, you will receive an email detailing your application submittal status as "pending". The District will then review your official documentation and you will be notified via email if your submitted test records qualify, do not qualify, or are incomplete.

If your submitted documentation is approved, you will receive another email reflecting "approved" status. This initial approval is **only** for your test score documentation. Final approvals or denials for the award will not be issued until the District reviews all eligibility criteria and classroom teacher evaluation ratings for *Highly Effective* status. Once the District determines a classroom teacher has a *Highly Effective* evaluation rating AND official score(s) documentation at or above the 80th percentile, he/she will be notified via email prior to December 1, 2016 of his/her final award status.

A newly hired classroom teacher is not required to have an evaluation rating in order to qualify. Newly hired classroom teachers must have submitted official score(s) documentation showing his/her score(s) at the 80th percentile ranking or higher in order to be included in the process. Newly hired classroom teachers will be notified of final award status prior to December 1, 2016.

9. What if I was a classroom teacher when I was evaluated as *Highly Effective* and am no longer in a classroom teacher position?

You must be in an active classroom teacher position at the time of the State's submission deadline, which is November 1, 2016. This does not include charter school leave. If you are on leave from the District due to working at a charter school, please see question #16 for instruction.

10. I work as a classroom teacher for the School District of Osceola County but I have not received my final evaluation scores because the District is waiting for Student Growth results. Can I submit my ACT and SAT score results and Best and Brightest Application while I await my Classroom Teacher Evaluation results?

Yes. It is important that you proactively submit your eligible ACT or SAT score results and your Best and Brightest application at your earliest convenience. This will allow the school district to begin its verification process. When your evaluation results are available, the District will verify them internally and notify you of your application status based on those results.

11. I am a new classroom teacher to Osceola School District for fiscal year 2017 but I also taught last year and received an evaluation rating in another K-12 District. How may I qualify for the scholarship award?

Please submit a copy of your 2015-2016 Classroom Teacher Evaluation and your official ACT or SAT record demonstrating your score(s) at the 80th percentile or above when completing your application.

12. I have my official ACT/SAT score results but my former school district has not yet finalized my 2015-2016 Classroom Teacher Evaluation. Can I submit my ACT and SAT score results and Best and Brightest Application while I await my Classroom Teacher Evaluation results?

Yes. In the event you are awaiting your 2015-2016 Classroom Teacher Evaluation results from your former school district, you are encouraged to submit your ACT or SAT official score documentation and Best and Brightest Application at your earliest convenience. This will allow the District to begin its verification process. We can verify your evaluation results as long as it is received by the Professional Development Learning Center prior to November 1st 2016. Your application will be updated with your evaluation documentation once it is received by the District.

13. 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?

When the final number of recipients is determined state-wide, we anticipate 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.

14. If I did not take or do not have SAT or ACT scores can I take the test now in order to qualify?

Yes. According to the Florida Department of Education, classroom teachers rated *Highly Effective* may take the ACT or SAT in order to earn the scholarship. The official score(s) documentation however demonstrating the classroom teacher has met the current 80th percentile ranking or higher must be submitted in your District application by the State’s November 1, 2016, deadline.

For those teachers opting to take the ACT assessment, do not register to take the Writing Test. This test is not needed to qualify for the scholarship as it is not included in the composite score. Additionally, it can slow down the reporting process causing a delinquency in receiving the score results prior to the State’s November 1st deadline.

15. When does my application need to be completed by?

District classroom teachers need to submit their application to the District, including their official ACT or SAT test score records, no later than the State’s November 1, 2016, deadline.

16. I work at a charter school. How do I apply for the scholarship award?

The language in the State Appropriations Bill that speaks to this scholarship notes that “Charter School Governing Boards” must submit data for their charter school to the State for the Best and Brightest Scholarship Program by the State’s deadline. Therefore, please contact your charter school administration for further information.

17. I have been awarded the Best and Brightest scholarship prior to this school year. Am I eligible again this year? Do I need to resubmit an application and score results?

Those teachers that were deemed eligible in the 2015-2016 fiscal year, shall remain eligible as long as he or she remains employed by the District as a classroom teacher at the time of the award and receives an annual performance evaluation rating of *Highly Effective* pursuant to 1012.34, F.S. These teachers will need to submit the 2016-2017 Best and Brightest Application and confirm the designated district department has retained a copy of the ACT or SAT score documentation.

18. Who do I contact if I have more questions?

Please email your questions to Thomas Phelps, Deputy Superintendent of Human Services at: phelpst@osceola.k12.fl.us . There may be a high volume of inquiries regarding this program, so we appreciate your patience as we respond to information requests.

19. I took the ACT and received my official score documentation. Why do I not see my percentile score?

In light of the recent Florida legislation related to classroom teacher scores on the ACT, in order to determine whether a Florida classroom teacher scored “at or above the 80th percentile on the ACT based upon the percentile ranks in effect when the teacher took the assessment”, ACT, Inc. has provided the following guidance based upon the best available historical norm information from the testing administrator’s archives.

1. The best evidence is the original score report received by the classroom teacher.
2. If a classroom teacher needs a replacement score report,
 - a. These can be ordered either by contacting ACT Student Services at 319-337-1270 or via the 2015-2016 ACT Additional Score Report (ASR) at: <http://www.act.org/aap/pdf/asrform.pdf>. Reports for testing that occurred prior to September 2012 have a fee of \$34.00 for normal processing and can be requested back to 1966.
 - b. The percentile ranks provided on ASRs reflect current year norms, **NOT** the norms in effect at the time the classroom teacher took the test.
 - c. The following are the minimum composite scores that were “at or above the 80th percentile” **at the time of testing**. Find your testing date range below to view the minimum composite score you need to be at or above the 80th percentile is:
 - September 2015 through August 2016: TBA
 - September 2011 through August 2015 : 26
 - September 1993 through August 2011: 25
 - September 1991 through August 1993: 24
 - September 1990 through August 1991: 25
 - September 1989 through August 1990: 24
 - September 1985 through August 1989: 25
 - September 1976 through August 1985: 24
 - September 1973 through August 1976: 25
 - September 1971 through August 1973: 24
 - September 1970 through August 1971: 25
 - September 1969 through August 1970: 24
 - September 1968 through August 1969: *
 - September 1966 through August 1968: 25

*ACT, Inc. cannot verify the composite score which corresponds to the 80th percentile for this period from archive materials. If a three-year norm were used for 1968 – 1969 an ACT composite score of 24 could be applied.

2016-2017 BEST & BRIGHTEST TEACHER SCHOLARSHIP – QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

SAT Score Percentile Information for Florida's Best and Brightest Scholarship

As requested by the State of Florida, the following information can be used to determine the SAT scores that were at or above the 80th percentile based on the rank in effect when the assessment was taken.¹

- Teachers can order archived score reports by calling 866-756-7346 or by filling out and mailing the form found at <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/scores/sending-scores/old-scores>. Archived score reports cost \$31.
- Teachers can send a copy of the score report directly to their district for an additional \$11.25 by providing the district's name and mailing address when ordering.
- Teachers who took the SAT more than once will receive all of the available score reports as part of their order.
- Archived score report requests take up to five weeks to process. Rush orders may be placed for additional fees.
- Teachers who tested prior to October 1973 should review FLDOE guidelines.
- Questions? Please call 866-756-7346 Monday through Friday from 8 am to 9pm EST, or visit: <https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/contact-us>.

Administration Dates	Verbal/ Critical Reading	Math
October 1973 - June 1975	550	590
October 1975 - June 1976	540	590
October 1976 - June 1978	540	580
October 1978 - June 1979	530	590
October 1979 - June 1981	530	580
October 1981 - June 1982	520	580
October 1982 - June 1984	530	580
October 1984 - June 1985	520	580
October 1985 - June 1986	530	580
October 1986 - June 1991	530	590
October 1991 - June 1993	520	590
October 1993 - June 1994	530	600
October 1994 - March 1995	520	610
April 1995 - June 1995	600	610
October 1995 - June 1997	610	610
October 1997 - June 2003	610	620
October 2003 - June 2007	610	630
October 2007 - June 2009	610	620
October 2009 - June 2010	610	630
October 2010 - June 2013	600	620
October 2013 - June 2015	600	630
October 2015 – June 2016	TBA	TBA

¹This information is based on available SAT archives.