

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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DPS: 2012-151

MEMORANDUM

TO: School District Superintendents

FROM: Pam Stewart

DATE: September 21, 2012

SUBJECT: Request for Nominations for Sunshine State Scholars

Once again, it is time to select your district's top 11th grade student in the area of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) to be honored at the 2013 Sunshine State Scholars Program.

The Sunshine State Scholars program was founded in 1997 by Dr. William Caldwell of the University of North Florida and brought together 12th grade students from throughout the state to compete in the disciplines of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). Many of these students, however, did not remain in Florida for their postsecondary education, since many had already completed their college applications prior to the competition.

In 2010, the Florida Education Foundation (the Foundation) changed the focus of the Sunshine State Scholars program to retain the intellectual talent in the Sunshine State. The Foundation asks each of Florida's 67 school districts to identify their top 11th grade student in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). This year, nine districts with enrollments of more than 75,000 (based on 2011 data) will be allowed to select two scholars. These districts include: Broward, Dade, Duval, Hillsborough, Lee, Orange, Palm Beach, Pinellas, and Polk. Each of the scholars, along with their parents and a teacher who has served as a significant influence for the scholar, will travel to Orlando on February 21-22, 2013, for an extraordinary two-day program.

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In addition to bringing together the scholars to be honored, the Foundation invites representatives from Florida's colleges and universities to meet with the students and discuss career and postsecondary opportunities available to them in Florida. According to a survey conducted in the summer of 2012, approximately 50 percent of the scholars remained in Florida and attended Florida colleges and universities. The Foundation would like that number to increase every year.

The attached document provides the minimum selection criteria for district nominees as well as other criteria that districts may want to use for determining their nominees. The name of each District Sunshine State Scholar and one alternate are **due no later than Friday, November 2, 2012**. District nominees must be submitted electronically via http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SSScholar_2013_DistrictSurvey by the Superintendent or their designee. Only one scholar's name (two for the nine districts named previously) and one alternate will be accepted.

Questions related to the Sunshine State Scholars Program should be directed to Karol Yeatts, Director, Office of Mathematics and Science, at Karol.Yeatts@fldoe.org.

PS/ky/s

Attachments