

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program (2015 GAA Line 99)

ACT and SAT percentile information are attached as appendices to this document to assist school districts in determining eligibility based on score reports for the Best and Brightest Program.

1. **What are the eligibility criteria for the Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program?**

In order to meet eligibility requirements for the scholarship, the individual must:

- a. Be a classroom teacher as defined in section 1012.01(2)(a), Florida Statutes (F.S.), who is employed by Florida school districts, charter schools, or the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind (FSDB) in 2015-2016;
- b. Have official ACT or SAT documentation that indicates either their score on the ACT was at or above the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile based on the rank in effect when the assessment was taken or that their scores on the SAT were at or above the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile based on the rank in effect when the assessment was taken; and
- c. Have received an evaluation of highly effective on the most recent evaluation available.

2. **According to section 1012.01(2)(a), F.S., what is the definition of a classroom teacher?**

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 substitute teachers eligible for the scholarship?**

No. Per the proviso language, the teacher must have been evaluated as highly effective per section 1012.34, F.S. Per s. 1012.34, a performance evaluation is not conducted for substitute teachers.

4. **What is the requirement for a first-year teacher who meets the requirement as a classroom teacher?**

For a first year teacher, an individual who has not previously taught, eligibility is based solely on ACT or SAT results.

5. **What if the experienced teacher is from out-of-state or from a Florida private school?**

For experienced teachers who are from out-of-state or a private school and are new to Florida public schools, charter schools or FSDB, eligibility is based on meeting the

classroom teacher definition and the ACT or SAT requirement since he or she does not have a Florida teacher evaluation.

6. **We have hired experienced Florida classroom teachers for 2015-2016 who were not evaluated in 2013-2014 or 2014-2015 because they were not employed. How will these teachers meet eligibility requirements?**

Experienced teachers who were hired in 2015-2016 and were not employed in 2014-2015 or 2013-2014, are considered “new.”

7. **What is the definition of an “official” record of the teacher’s ACT or SAT score?**

An official record is the original score report from ACT or the College Board (SAT).

8. **For teachers who have registered to take the ACT again, should they take the regular ACT or the regular ACT and the Writing portion?**

Teachers should register for the regular ACT. The Writing portion is not needed. Results must be provided to school districts by October 1 in order to determine eligibility.

9. **Which percentile should be used for meeting eligibility requirements for the ACT or SAT score report – national or state?**

The national percentile score should be used to meet eligibility requirements.

10. **What if the teacher is not able to obtain an official score report from ACT or SAT by the deadline?**

Both ACT and the College Board/SAT are working with the department to ensure available test score reports are sent to the individuals requesting them. Additional information is available from ACT and the College Board upon request.

11. **What if the official score report is received after October 1, 2015?**

Pursuant to the language in law, in order to demonstrate eligibility for an award, an eligible teacher must submit to the school district, no later than October 1, 2015, an official score report of his or her SAT or ACT score demonstrating that the teacher scored at or above the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile based on the percentile ranks in effect when the teacher took the assessment.

12. **How will qualifying teachers be reported to the department by December 1?**

The department will provide additional reporting instructions to school districts, charter school governing boards and FSDB in the near future.

13. **If an eligible teacher who was reported December 1, 2015, is terminated or resigns prior to February 1, what must happen to the funds received by the district?**

Districts must return funds to the department for any teacher that is no longer employed after the December 1, 2015, reporting date.

14. **Will eligible teachers at charter schools be reported by the district or by the charter school's governing board?**

Per proviso language, charter school governing boards shall report the eligible teachers. However, a charter school governing board and school district could mutually decide that they wish for the district to report on the charter school governing board's behalf.

15. **Will the department distribute funds directly to charter schools?**

No, all funds will flow through to the district.

16. **What (if any) assurances will be required of the district to ensure that the funds distributed to charter schools have been issued to eligible teachers?**

The charter school's governing board is subject to the same requirement as school districts, and must certify that its list of teachers is eligible for funds. No other assurances are required.

17. **What will be required of districts related to auditable records?**

Districts, charter school governing boards and FSDB must maintain on file the official score reports for each eligible teacher.