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MEMORANDUM

TO: School District Superintendents

FROM: Hershel Lyons

DATE: October 19, 2018

SUBJECT: **Designation of Schools of Excellence**

Contact Information:

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DPS: 2018-136

The State Board of Education will be presented the list of Schools of Excellence for designation at their October 25, 2018, meeting. This program was created by the 2017 Florida Legislature. Districts with a School of Excellence are listed on page two. The list of schools is posted with the board meeting materials at www.fldoe.org/board/meetings.

Section 1003.631, Florida Statutes, requires the State Board of Education to designate a school as a School of Excellence if the school's percentage of possible points earned in its school grade calculation is in the 80th percentile or higher for schools comprised of the same grade groupings (elementary, middle, high and combination) for at least two of the last three school years.

In order to qualify for initial designation as a School of Excellence, schools had to receive a grade of A or B in each of the most recent three school years (2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18) and had to rank at the 80th percentile or higher for their school type for at least two of the last three years. Qualifying schools shall retain the designation for up to three years. There are 52 elementary, 11 middle, 10 high and 15 combination schools that qualified as Schools of Excellence for the first time in 2017-18.

Schools that received an initial School of Excellence designation based on 2016-17 school grades maintained that designation if the school earned a 2017-18 school grade of A or B. There are 333 elementary, 116 middle, 94 high and 87 combination schools that maintained the designation.

A School of Excellence will have the following administrative flexibilities outlined in the law:

- exemption from any provision of law or rule that expressly requires a minimum period of daily or weekly instruction in reading;
- principal autonomy as provided under section 1012.28(8), Florida Statutes;
- instructional personnel may substitute one school year of employment at a School of Excellence for 20 inservice points, up to 60 inservice points total in a five-year cycle, toward the renewal of a professional certificate;
- exemption from compliance with school district policies or procedures establishing times for the start and end of the school day; and
- calculation of class size compliance based on the average number of students at the school level.

HERSHEL LYONS
CHANCELLOR OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Designation of Schools of Excellence

October 12, 2018

Page Two

Districts with a School of Excellence:

- Alachua
- Baker
- Bay
- Brevard
- Broward
- Calhoun
- Charlotte
- Clay
- Collier
- Columbia
- Miami-Dade
- Duval
- Escambia
- Flagler
- Gadsden
- Gilchrist
- Hardee
- Hernando
- Hillsborough
- Indian River
- Jackson
- Lee
- Leon
- Manatee
- Marion
- Martin
- Monroe
- Nassau
- Okaloosa
- Orange
- Osceola
- Palm Beach
- Pasco
- Pinellas
- Polk
- St. Johns
- St. Lucie
- Santa Rosa
- Sarasota
- Seminole
- Sumter
- Suwannee
- Volusia
- Wakulla
- Walton
- FAU Lab School
- FSU Lab School
- UF Lab School

Congratulations to these districts and schools.

Pending the approval of the State Board of Education, the Commissioner of Education shall be granted the authority to designate a school, at any point during the year, as a School of Excellence if that school meets the criteria subsequent to the approval of the initial list of Schools of Excellence designated by the State Board of Education for that school year.

HL/db