



Andy Tuck, *Chair*  
Marva Johnson, *Vice Chair*  
*Members*  
Ben Gibson  
Tom Grady  
Michael Olenick  
Joe York

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** School District Superintendents

**FROM:** Jacob Oliva

**DATE:** September 13, 2019

**SUBJECT:** Designation of Schools of Excellence

### **Contact Information:**

Holly Edenfield  
850-245-0509  
[Holly.Edenfield@fldoe.org](mailto:Holly.Edenfield@fldoe.org)  
**DPS: 2019-139**

The State Board of Education will be presented the list of Schools of Excellence for designation at their September 20, 2019, meeting. Section 1003.631, Florida Statutes, requires the State Board 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 80<sup>th</sup> 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. This program was created by the 2017 Florida Legislature. Of the 3,324 schools that received a school grade in 2018-19, 775 of those schools have either qualified for or maintained the designation of School of Excellence (422 elementary schools, 132 middle schools, 106 high schools and 115 combination schools). 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](http://www.fldoe.org/board/meetings).

The number of schools qualifying for the School of Excellence designation increased by eight percent over last year. In 2018-19, 66 schools qualified for their first year of designation and shall retain the designation for up to three years if they continue to meet the qualifying criteria. Additionally, a total of 709 schools maintained their designation, with 85 schools qualifying for their second year of designation and 624 schools qualifying for their third year of 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.

JACOB OLIVA  
CHANCELLOR OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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
- Lake
- Lee
- Leon
- Manatee
- Marion
- Martin
- Monroe
- Nassau
- Okaloosa
- Orange
- Osceola
- Palm Beach
- Pasco
- Pinellas
- Polk
- Putnam
- St. Johns
- St. Lucie
- Santa Rosa
- Sarasota
- Seminole
- Sumter
- Suwannee
- Union
- 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.

JO/he