

By Senator Simmons

9-01238A-17

20171460__

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Florida Best and Brightest
3 Teacher Scholarship Program; amending s. 1012.731,
4 F.S.; revising legislative findings; revising the
5 intent of the program to include eligibility for
6 school administrators who meet certain standards;
7 revising requirements for a classroom teacher to be
8 eligible for a scholarship under the program;
9 providing eligibility requirements for a school
10 administrator to receive a scholarship under the
11 program; requiring an eligible classroom teacher or
12 school administrator to submit certain information to
13 the school district demonstrating eligibility for an
14 award; providing that certain classroom teachers and
15 school administrators remain eligible for the award
16 under certain circumstances; deleting the scheduled
17 expiration of the program; providing an effective
18 date.

19
20 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

21
22 Section 1. Section 1012.731, Florida Statutes, is amended
23 to read:

24 1012.731 The Florida Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship
25 Program.—

26 (1) The Legislature recognizes that, second only to
27 parents, teachers and administrators play the most critical role
28 within schools in preparing students to achieve a high level of
29 academic performance. The Legislature further recognizes the

9-01238A-17

20171460__

30 importance of that research has linked student outcomes to a
31 teacher's or administrator's own academic achievement and the
32 need to strategically assign the most effective teachers and
33 administrators to the lowest-performing schools. Therefore, it
34 is the intent of the Legislature to designate teachers and
35 administrators who are highly effective and who either have
36 achieved high academic standards during their own education or
37 are assigned in high-need areas as Florida's best and brightest
38 ~~teacher~~ scholars.

39 (2) There is created the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher
40 Scholarship Program to be administered by the Department of
41 Education. The scholarship program shall provide categorical
42 funding for scholarships to be awarded to classroom teachers, as
43 defined in s. 1012.01(2)(a), and school administrators, as
44 defined in s. 1012.01(3)(c), who are highly effective and who
45 either have demonstrated a high level of academic achievement or
46 are assigned, or agree to be assigned, to a low-performing
47 school.

48 (3)(a) To be eligible for a scholarship, a classroom
49 teacher must have been evaluated as highly effective pursuant to
50 s. 1012.34 in the school year immediately preceding the year in
51 which the scholarship will be awarded and must meet at least one
52 of the following criteria:

53 1. Achieved a composite score at or above the 80th
54 percentile on either the SAT or the ACT based on the National
55 Percentile Ranks in effect when the classroom teacher took the
56 assessment;

57 2. Achieved a cumulative undergraduate grade point average
58 of at least 3.5 on a 4.0 scale, as verified on the teacher's

9-01238A-17

20171460__

59 official final college transcript;

60 3. Achieved a score at or above the 90th percentile on the
61 Florida Teacher Certification Examination Subject Area
62 Examination in the subject area in which he or she will teach in
63 the subsequent academic year; or

64 4. Currently teach, or agree in writing to teach in the
65 subsequent academic year, at a low-performing school, as
66 evidenced by a school grade of "D" or "F"; a school implementing
67 a turnaround option pursuant to s. 1008.33; or a school ranked
68 as one of the 300 lowest-performing elementary schools pursuant
69 to s. 1011.62(1)(f) and (9).

70 (b) To be eligible for a scholarship, a school
71 administrator must have been evaluated as highly effective
72 pursuant to s. 1012.34 in the school year immediately preceding
73 the year in which the scholarship will be awarded and must meet
74 at least one of the following criteria:

75 1. Achieved a composite score at or above the 80th
76 percentile on the SAT or ACT based on the National Percentile
77 Ranks in effect when the school administrator took the
78 assessment;

79 2. Achieved a cumulative undergraduate grade point average
80 of at least 3.5 on a 4.0 scale, as verified on the school
81 administrator's official final college transcript; or

82 3. Currently administer, or agree in writing to administer
83 in the subsequent academic year, at a low-performing school, as
84 evidenced by a school grade of "D" or "F"; a school implementing
85 a turnaround option pursuant to s. 1008.33; or a school ranked
86 as one of the 300 lowest-performing elementary schools pursuant
87 to s. 1011.62(1)(f) and (9) ~~and have been evaluated as highly~~

9-01238A-17

20171460__

88 ~~effective pursuant to s. 1012.34 in the school year immediately~~
89 ~~preceding the year in which the scholarship will be awarded,~~
90 ~~unless the classroom teacher is newly hired by the district~~
91 ~~school board and has not been evaluated pursuant to s. 1012.34.~~

92 (c) ~~(b)~~ In order to demonstrate eligibility for an award, a
93 ~~an eligible~~ classroom teacher or school administrator must
94 submit to the school district, no later than November 1, the
95 following information, as applicable:

96 1. An official record of his or her SAT or ACT score
97 demonstrating achievement of a score ~~that the classroom teacher~~
98 ~~scored~~ at or above the 80th percentile based on the National
99 Percentile Ranks in effect at the time of ~~when the teacher took~~
100 the assessment; an official final college transcript
101 demonstrating a cumulative undergraduate grade point average of
102 at least 3.5 on a 4.0 scale; or, for classroom teachers only, an
103 official record of his or her subject area exam score
104 demonstrating achievement of a score at or above the 90th
105 percentile; or

106 2. A signed agreement accepting reassignment to a low-
107 performing school in the subsequent academic year.

108 (d) Once a classroom teacher or school administrator is
109 deemed eligible by the school district, including teachers
110 deemed eligible in the 2015-2016 or 2016-2017 fiscal years ~~year~~,
111 the teacher or school administrator shall remain eligible as
112 long as he or she remains employed by the school district as a
113 classroom teacher or school administrator at the time of the
114 award and receives an annual performance evaluation rating of
115 highly effective pursuant to s. 1012.34. A classroom teacher or
116 school administrator who earns the award for assignment at, or

9-01238A-17

20171460__

117 who accepts reassignment to, a low-performing school shall
118 remain eligible as long as he or she remains employed by the
119 school district as a classroom teacher or school administrator
120 at the time of the award; receives an annual performance
121 evaluation rating of highly effective pursuant to s. 1012.34;
122 and remains at the assigned low-performing school, regardless of
123 whether the school continues to meet the criteria of a low-
124 performing school, or accepts reassignment to another low-
125 performing school.

126 (4) Annually, by December 1, each school district shall
127 submit to the department the number of eligible classroom
128 teachers and school administrators who qualify for the
129 scholarship.

130 (5) Annually, by February 1, the department shall disburse
131 scholarship funds to each school district for each eligible
132 classroom teacher and school administrator to receive a
133 scholarship as provided in the General Appropriations Act. A
134 scholarship in the amount provided in the General Appropriations
135 Act shall be awarded to every eligible classroom teacher and
136 school administrator. If the number of eligible classroom
137 teachers and school administrators exceeds the total
138 appropriation authorized in the General Appropriations Act, the
139 department shall prorate the ~~per-teacher~~ scholarship amount.

140 (6) Annually, by April 1, each school district shall award
141 the scholarship to each eligible classroom teacher and school
142 administrator.

143 (7) For purposes of this section, the term "school
144 district" includes the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind
145 and charter school governing boards.

9-01238A-17

20171460__

146
147
148

~~(8) This section expires July 1, 2017.~~

Section 2. This act shall take effect June 30, 2017.