

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Consent Item
October 19, 2022

SUBJECT: Designation of Schools of Excellence

PROPOSED BOARD ACTION

For Approval

AUTHORITY FOR STATE BOARD ACTION

Section 1003.631, F.S.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Section 1003.631, F.S., requires the State Board of Education (SBE) 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.

This agenda item will approve the list of Schools of Excellence and grant the Commissioner of Education 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 SBE for that school year.

Due to the cancellation of assessments and school grades for the 2019-20 school year, this is the first year that schools initially designated in 2018 need to qualify again to renew their designation. Pursuant to Florida Department of Education (FDOE) Emergency Order No. 2021-EO-02, schools were not issued grades for the 2020-21 school year unless they opted in to receive their grade for all statutory purposes. Schools that did not opt in retained their existing School of Excellence designations. Schools that chose not to opt in for the 2020-21 school year that were in year three in 2020-21 and retained their School of Excellence status, needed to qualify again in 2021-22 to renew their designation.

In 2021-22, 697 schools were designated as a School of Excellence. Of these schools, 310 maintained their designation from 2020-21, 333 renewed their designation, and 54 were newly designated in 2021-22.

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

- exemption from any law or rule that requires a minimum period of daily or weekly instruction in reading;
- principal autonomy as provided under s. 1012.28(8), F.S.;
- instructional personnel may substitute one year of employment at the school for 20 in-service points, up to 60 points total in a five-year cycle, toward the renewal of a professional certificate;
- exemption from compliance with school district policies 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.

Supporting Documentation Included: Schools of Excellence: Elementary Schools, Middle Schools, High Schools, and Combination Schools (under separate cover)

Facilitator: Jacob Oliva, Senior Chancellor