

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Education

BILL: SB 486

INTRODUCER: Senator Bradley

SUBJECT: Florida Best and Brightest Programs

DATE: December 6, 2019

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Brick	Sikes	ED	Pre-meeting
2.			AED	
3.			AP	

I. Summary:

SB 486 repeals the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher Program, the Florida Best and Brightest Principal Program, and the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher and Principal Allocation.

In the 2019-2020 fiscal year, the legislature appropriated \$284.5 million for the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher and Principal Allocation through the Florida Education Finance Program.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2020.

II. Present Situation:

In 2015, the legislature established the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program to award scholarships to highly effective classroom teachers who demonstrate a high level of academic achievement.¹ In 2017, the legislature established the Florida Best and Brightest Principal Scholarship Program to provide categorical funding for scholarships to school principals who recruit and retain a high percentage of best and brightest teachers.² In 2019, the legislature revised the Best and Brightest Teacher Scholarship Program to remove a teacher's scores on qualifying academic assessments as a factor in determining eligibility for the award and created the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher and Principal Allocation to fund both programs within the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP).³

The Florida Best and Brightest Teacher Program authorizes three types of monetary awards for teachers – recruitment, retention and recognition – each with distinct criteria for determining

¹ Specific Appropriation 99A, s. 2, ch. 2015-232L.O.F.

² Section 47, ch. 2017-116, L.O.F.

³ Sections 19-20, ch. 2019-23, L.O.F.

eligibility.⁴ The Florida Best and Brightest Principal Program authorizes monetary awards to school principals based on school performance.

The Florida Best and Brightest Teacher Program

The Florida Best and Brightest Teacher Program provides bonuses to recruit, retain, and recognize teachers who meet the needs of the state and achieve success in the classroom. The law provides the following awards:⁵

- Recruitment awards for newly hired teachers who are content experts in mathematics, science, computer science, reading, or civics.⁶
- Retention awards for teachers rated as “highly effective” or “effective” the preceding year who teach in a school that has demonstrated academic improvement, as evidenced by the school improving an average of three percentage points or more in the percentage of total possible points achieved for determining school grades over the prior 3 years.
- Recognition awards for instructional personnel rated as “highly effective” or “effective” and selected by the school principal based on performance criteria and policies adopted by the district school board.

The Florida Best and Brightest Principal Program

A school principal is eligible for an award under the Florida Best and Brightest Principal Program if the principal has been serving as school principal at his or her school for at least four consecutive school years, and the school has improved an average of three percentage points or more in the percentage of total possible points achieved for determining school grades over the prior 3 years.⁷

The Florida Best and Brightest Teacher and Principal Allocation

The Florida Best and Brightest Teacher and Principal Allocation provides the funding for the Best and Brightest Teacher and Principal programs. All award amounts for the programs are specified annually in the General Appropriations Act (GAA) and distributed to each school district based on the district’s proportionate share of FEFP base funding.⁸ For the 2019-2020 fiscal year, the legislature appropriated \$284.5 million for Best and Brightest Teacher and Principal program awards, including:⁹

- One-time recruitment awards of up to \$4,000;
- Retention awards of \$2,500 for highly effective teachers and \$1,000 for effective teachers;
- Principal awards of \$5,000.

⁴ Section 1012.731, F.S.

⁵ Section 1012.731, F.S.

⁶ The Florida Department of Education establishes the criteria, which is set forth in Rule 6A-1.0503, F.A.C., for determining which teachers qualify as content experts. Section 1012.731(3)(a), F.S.

⁷ Section 1012.732, F.S.

⁸ Section 1011.62(18), F.S.

⁹ Specific Appropriation 93, s. 2, ch. 2019-115, L.O.F.

If the calculated awards exceed the allocation, a school district may prorate the awards.¹⁰ A school district may provide recognition awards for instructional personnel from funds remaining after the payment of all awards for principals and teacher recruitment and retention.¹¹

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 486 repeals the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher Program, the Florida Best and Brightest Principal Program, and the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher and Principal Allocation. The repeal of these programs and the associated allocation may result in the elimination of awards available for eligible teachers, principals, and instructional personnel under the programs.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2020.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

SB 486 may result in the elimination of awards currently available for eligible teachers, principals, and instructional personnel under the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher and Principal programs.

¹⁰ Section 1011.62(18), F.S.

¹¹ Section 1012.731(3)(c), F.S.

C. Government Sector Impact:

In the 2019-2020 fiscal year, the legislature appropriated \$284.5 million for the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher and Principal Allocation through the Florida Education Finance Program. The appropriation of such funds may no longer be necessary with the repeal of the Florida Best and Brightest Teacher and Principal programs and the associated allocation.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends ss. 1011.62 and 1011.71, F.S.
The bill repeals ss. 1012.731 and 1012.732, F.S.

IX. Additional Information:**A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.