

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

June 17, 2003

SUBJECT: Pilot Career Ladder Program – BEST

PROPOSED BOARD ACTION

Approval of the Department of Education's plan for implementing the Pilot Career Ladder Program – BEST – as authorized by and in compliance with the 2003 General Appropriations Act, Line Item 64A, and Sections 1000.41, 1012.231, 1012.21 (2), 1012.22 (1), and 1012.987, Florida Statutes.

AUTHORITY FOR STATE BOARD ACTION

The 2003 General Appropriations Act, Line Item 64A, and Sections 1000.41, 1012.231, 1012.21 (2), 1012.22 (1), and 1012.987, Florida Statutes.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This year, the Florida Legislature created the Better Educated Students and Teachers (BEST) Act, which requires all school districts to implement a salary career ladder for classroom teachers beginning with the 2004-2005 school year. The career ladder must have four levels: 1) Associate Teacher – classroom teachers not professionally certified or low performing teachers; 2) Professional Teacher – classroom teachers who are professionally certified; 3) Lead Teacher – classroom teachers who are responsible for leading other teachers; and 4) Mentor Teacher – classroom teachers who serve as regular mentors to teachers, serve as faculty-based professional development coordinators and provide direct instruction to low-performing students.

The Legislature also appropriated a total of \$25 million in Aid to Local Governments from the Principal State School Trust Fund for the establishment of district best practices models of the Salary Career Ladder Program, in accordance with the provision of Section 1012.231, Florida Statutes, during the 2003-2004 school year. Approval of these early innovator school districts will be determined by the Commissioner of Education, and funds will be awarded only to those school districts that fully and most feasibly implement the spirit and intent of the Florida BEST Teaching Program.

Implementation of the BEST Act will support the State Board of Education's Strategic Imperative #1: Increasing the supply of highly qualified K-12 instructors by: 1) exciting interest in teaching as a career in Florida, 2) putting more qualified teachers, especially minority teachers, in Florida's classrooms, 3) giving teachers strong professional support, and 4) keeping good teachers in the profession.

Supporting Documentation:

Line Item 64A, Better Educated Students and Teachers (BEST), General Appropriations Act
Section 1000.41, Florida Statutes, Better Educated Students and Teachers (BEST)
Section 1012.231, Florida Statutes, BEST Florida Teaching Salary Career Ladder Program
Section 1012.27, Florida Statutes, Public School Personnel; Powers and Duties of School Superintendent
Section 1012.22, Florida Statutes, Public School Personnel; Powers and Duties of District School Board
Section 1012.987, Florida Statutes, Education Leadership Development

Facilitators and Presenters: Jim Warford, Chancellor, K-12 Public Schools

BETTER EDUCATED STUDENTS AND TEACHERS (BEST) FLORIDA
TEACHING SALARY CAREER LADDER PROGRAM
PROPOSED WORK PLAN

PROJECT OVERVIEW (SB 30-A)

BEST Guiding Principles

The 2003 Florida Legislature created the Better Educated Students and Teachers (BEST) Act of 2003, which specified the following purposes and guiding principles of BEST Florida Teaching.

- 1) Teachers lead, students learn.
- 2) Teachers maintain orderly, disciplined classrooms conducive to student learning.
- 3) Teachers are trained, recruited, well compensated, and retained for quality.
- 4) Teachers are well rewarded for their students' high performance.
- 5) Teachers are most effective when served by exemplary school administrators.

These purposes and principles must be implemented to ensure a high quality education for all of Florida's students.

BEST Florida Teaching Salary Career Ladder Program

A major initiative to support the implementation of these purposes and principles is the BEST Florida Teaching Salary Career Ladder Program for classroom teachers which was also created in this legislation. By December 1, 2003, the State Board of Education must approve guidelines and criteria for district plans for this program which are to be submitted to the State Board of Education by March 1, 2004.

Beginning with the 2004-2005 academic year, each district school board is required to implement a salary career ladder for classroom teachers. The recommended salary schedule for teachers for 2004-2005 must be consistent with the district's career ladder and the district's five percent performance pay policy must provide for the evaluation of classroom teachers within each level of the salary career ladder provided in Section 1012.231, Florida Statutes.

The categories of classroom teachers reflected in the salary career ladder must be as follows:

- 1) Associate Teacher – Classroom teachers who have not yet received professional certification, or a classroom teacher who has professional certification but has been evaluated as a low-performance teacher.
- 2) Professional Teacher – Classroom teachers who have received professional certification.
- 3) Lead Teacher – Classroom teachers who are responsible for leading others in the school as department chairperson, lead teacher, grade chairperson, intern coordinator, or professional development coordinator.
- 4) Mentor Teacher – Classroom teachers who serve as regular mentors to other teachers, serve as faculty-based professional development coordinators, and participate in direct instruction of low-performing students.

Each district school board must develop a plan to implement the salary career ladder as prescribed above and submit the plan to the State Board of Education by March 1, 2004, for approval.

BEST Florida Pilot Career Ladder Program

The Legislature also appropriated a total of \$25 million in aid to local governments from the Principal State School Trust Fund for the establishment of district best practices models of the Salary Career Ladder Program, in accordance with Section 1012.231, Florida Statutes, during the 2003-2004 school year. Funds will be awarded only to those school districts that fully and most feasibly implement the spirit and intent of the Florida BEST Teaching Program. Selection of these districts will be determined by the Commissioner of Education.

To be eligible to participate in the Pilot Career Ladder Program:

- 1) A school board must adopt in an open meeting, new, permanently established positions which reflect the four salary career ladder positions established by law.
- 2) A school board must agree to reach consensus with the Commissioner of Education regarding a developmental model by December 31, 2003, and begin trial implementation in all of the district's schools beginning January, 2004.
- 3) A school board must adopt in an open meeting a plan for principal leadership designation based on student performance, school grade, and teacher retention as prescribed by State Board of Education rules. (Section 1012.987, Florida Statutes)
- 4) The bargaining agent representative must submit to the school board for verification an agreement to each of the established career ladder positions, with salary levels to follow.

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

DATE	ACTION
June 15 – July 31, 2003	Develop state criteria, guidelines, and grant applications with stakeholder representatives, including Teachers of the Year, superintendents, principals, district program staff, and district finance officers. Provide briefings for the Governor and legislative staff. Submit rules for approval to the State Board of Education establishing the criteria and procedures for principal leadership designation as required by Section 1012.987, Florida Statutes.
August 15, 2003	Conduct meeting with Commissioner and Superintendents from select districts and provide districts with program criteria, guidelines, and applications.
Sept. – Nov. 1, 2003	Districts complete grant applications with technical assistance from DOE and submit to state.
Sept. 2003	School Boards from Pilot Districts approve career ladder positions and principal leadership designations.
Nov.1 – Nov. 10, 2003	DOE reviews grant applications.
Nov. 15, 2003	Submit grants to Commissioner.
Nov. , 2003	Briefings with Governor and legislative staff.
Dec.1, 2003	Provide guidelines and criteria for 2004-2005 district plans to State Board for approval.
Dec. 1, 2003	Grants approved by Commissioner and State Board.
Dec., 2003-Jan, 2004	Send guidelines and criteria to all districts for 2004-2005 program implementation and provide technical assistance through regional meetings.
Jan. 1, 2004	Grant implementation begins.
Feb. – March, 2004	Commissioner briefs Governor and legislative committees on process and progress of innovator models.
March – April, 2004	Superintendents from Pilot Districts and School Board members brief legislative committees on process and progress.
March 1, 2004	2004-2005 District plans due to state.

* No highlighting indicates BEST Principal State Trust Fund Implementation Plan (2003-2004) (Pilot Districts)

** Gray highlighting indicates statewide BEST Florida Teaching Salary Career Ladder Program Implementation Plan (2004-2005)