

The School Board of Sarasota County

Merit Award Program Plan

August 2007

In March 2007, the passage of Senate Bill 1226 created the Merit Award Program (MAP) and replaced the 2006 proviso language for performance pay plans designed to fund the Special Teachers are Rewarded (STAR) program. SB 1226 created new options for districts and permitted time to develop and negotiate new plans for state-funded performance pay. To that end, The School Board of Sarasota County (SBSC) chose to develop a Merit Award Plan [ss1012.225(5)] to conform with requirements to receive state-funded performance pay [ss1012.225(1)] for implementation in 2007-2008. Unlike the prior plan, the state will not impose any sanctions or penalties for non-participation in MAP. If approved by the Commissioner of Education, the district will receive an allocation based on the district's proportion of K-12 base funding to award top performing instructional personnel and school-based administrators 5% of the district's average teacher salary, as reported by the Florida Department of Education.

The MAP Advisory Committee

An advisory committee, comprised of teachers, principals, central administrative staff, and union leadership worked collaboratively to design the MAP plan. The members of the committee will continue to serve in an advisory capacity to provide guidance on any specific procedural details that may arise during the course of program implementation.

The MAP advisory committee developed the Sarasota County MAP procedures based on the following guiding principles and the premise that the process will be:

- Fair to all instructional personnel, regardless of school, teaching, or job assignment

- Reliant, to the extent possible, on existing data sources in order to minimize the over-testing of students and the reduce the burden on school-sites to implement assessments
- Founded on the best research practice for analyzing data for performance pay
- Based on an appraisal system aligned to NeXt Generation values and professional performance expectations
- Be transparent and understandable, and communicated to all stakeholders

MAP Eligibility

All school-based instructional personnel, district-based instructional personnel, and school-based administrators are eligible for MAP consideration. The exceptions are paraprofessionals, substitute teachers, Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten teachers, and district-level administrators who are not eligible for MAP participation. Personnel are not required to apply in order to be considered for MAP. All teachers, school- and district-based instructional personnel, and school-based administrators will participate in MAP if they are actively employed for 91 or more instructional days for the academic year. Awards for MAP do not affect other awards or supplements for which personnel may qualify and/or receive.

State MAP Requirements

To receive state funds for performance pay, the district must identify the “top performing” instructional personnel and school-based administrators on the basis of a combination of student academic performance and the annual performance appraisal of professional competencies. Sixty percent (60%) of the assessment of personnel will be based on the academic achievement of the students assigned to the teacher, or on those students for whom the person has responsibility. The other 40% will be based on the individual’s professional competencies and performance, as determined by the appropriate SBSC annual appraisal system. Each of the MAP components is described in the next sections.

Student Assessment (Testing) Requirements

In order to satisfy the testing requirements expressed in SB1226 for MAP, national, state, and district standardized tests must be used to measure student achievement. Student performance on the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) will be used for personnel who teach those subjects for which there is a corresponding FCAT student score in that content area and for school and district instructional personnel who have school-wide responsibilities in one or more schools. For instructional personnel who teach “non-FCAT” courses the determination of improved student achievement will be based on locally adopted standardized tests, such as the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT), national standardized tests, such as PSAT and Advanced Placement (AP) exams, or End-of-Course Exams (ECE) which measure the Sunshine State Standards/course objectives, as applicable. ECE exams are available through the state’s Clearinghouse for ECE and will be adopted by the district for those content areas/courses not assessed by any available commercially-produced standardized test. The assessments used to determine student achievement are described in Appendix A for school-based instructional personnel assigned to elementary, middle, and high schools and in Appendix B for district level instructional staff.

A second state requirement is that the evaluation of student achievement be based on a “balanced system” of measurements using both academic proficiency and learning gains. To achieve the required balance, the number of instructional personnel who are evaluated based on student proficiency and student gains is comparable. The decision as to whether proficiency or gains was the most appropriate and feasible method was based on several factors: the degree of relevance of the test content to the course content and whether attainment of student expectations was more relevant than a score change from one year to the next. For example, academic proficiency is more appropriate for determining students’ achievement of the content of an AP course; learning gains is more appropriate for determining if students’ reading skills (based on the FCAT) have improved over the course of a school year.

Test Use Guidelines

In order to maintain the integrity of the tests and not compromise the validity of the results, the district will adhere to the guidelines provided by the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) to minimize security risks and ensure that proper test administration procedures are followed. The district will establish local procedures for the preparation, duplication, distribution, collection, scanning, and scoring of all of the assessments used for MAP. In the event of a security breach, the district will follow protocol for dealing with such infractions and report any unethical practices to the FLDOE.

Instructional Personnel Performance Appraisal System

PRIDE is an acronym for the teacher appraisal system: **P**rofessional **R**ubrics **I**nvesting and **D**eveloping **E**ducator **E**xcellence. The appraisal system was developed by a knowledgeable and highly skilled committee that researched best practice nationally and incorporated the teaching competencies of Florida Educator Accomplished Practices, NeXt Generation Learning, and the current Sarasota Teacher Appraisal System (TPAS) into PRIDE.

Purpose

The purpose of revising the appraisal system is to ensure that it is in compliance with Florida State Statute; especially in the domain of student achievement. PRIDE is based on the belief that Sarasota County teachers will help students compete in the 21st century and be productive world citizens. Current research indicates that to be prepared for the future, students cannot merely be passive recipients of information, but rather active users of information for problem solving. The competencies delineated in the Teacher Evaluation are those consistently identified in the research as being essential in effecting student achievement. The performance of the distinguished teacher reflects these competencies.

PRIDE Performance Levels

Two evaluation summary forms (Appendix C) and two rubrics (Appendix D) were developed to assess performance levels; one for Classroom Teachers and the other for Non-Classroom Teachers. Each rubric is comprised of performance indicators measured as Unsatisfactory, Developing, Proficient, or Distinguished. However, for the teacher's formal evaluation, only three indicators will be used (i.e. Unsatisfactory, Developing, and Proficient). The Distinguished indicator is not part of the formal evaluation and will only be used for the purpose of earning bonus MAP points, and is therefore referred to as "PRIDE Plus."

Both the Classroom Teacher and Non-Classroom Teacher evaluations are based on the four domains, listed below. The rubric and evaluation summary form consists of four domains and 22 teacher competencies for the Classroom Teacher and four domains and 21 teacher competencies for Non-Classroom Teachers.

Domain I:	Creating a Culture for Learning
Domain II:	Planning for Success
Domain III:	Instructing and Assessing for Student Achievement
Domain IV:	Communicating Professional Commitment

For each competency a score will be earned:

0 points for Unsatisfactory

2 points for Developing

4 points for Proficient

+ 2 bonus points for Distinguished (*for use with MAP Program*)

Level I Teachers are evaluated two times annually. The end of the year evaluation score will be used in the assignment of MAP points. Level II teachers are evaluated once annually and end of the year evaluation score will be used in the assignment of MAP points.

Regardless of the ratings received on the competencies and/or the points earned, each person will be eligible for consideration for MAP, and points will be tabulated for a MAP score.

PRIDE Values for MAP

The annual performance appraisal constitutes 40% of the total MAP points. Therefore, PRIDE values for the purpose of MAP are assigned on a 0 to 400-point continuum. The remaining 60% of the MAP points are earned from the student achievement component. The “formula” is presented in the box below.

Annual Appraisal MAP Points Possible 0 – 400	+	Student Achievement MAP Points Possible 0 - 600	=	TOTAL MAP Possible 0 - 1000
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The scores on the competencies are summed and weighted to determine the number of MAP points. Classroom Teachers Competencies are weighted 3.03 which could yield 133 points if all competencies are scored Developing; 266 points if all are scored Proficient; and 400 points if all are scored as Distinguished.

Non-Classroom Teachers Competencies are weighted 3.175 which could yield 133 points if all competencies are scored Developing; 266 points if all are scored Proficient; and 400 points if all are scored as Distinguished.

School-Based Administrator Appraisal System

The annual performance appraisal system for school-based administrators was revised to reflect the Florida School Principal Leadership professional competencies. The evaluation of performance on each of the competencies is rated as Unsatisfactory (0 points), Developing (2 points), Proficient (4 points) or Distinguished (6 points). Please refer to Appendix E for a copy of the *School Administrator Annual Appraisal* form.

The scores on the competencies are summed and converted to a 400 point scale for the appraisal portion of the MAP score.

Differentiated Personnel Groupings

For the purpose of allocating MAP awards and to offset any effects that may result due to the use of different assessment tools and methods of calculating improved student achievement, the MAP advisory committee determined the need to differentiate among personnel groupings. The first level of differentiation was between instructional personnel and school-based administrators. For instructional personnel, job assignments were also grouped based on whether the assignment/work location is a school site or district-wide/central office. The advisory committee established further divisions for instructional personnel, as described in the following sections.

School-based instructional personnel. Divisions within each of the elementary, middle, and high school levels served as a method of differentiating the various instructional personnel groups. Further divisions were based on teaching assignments as follows: Reading, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, ESE Academic Teachers, Non-Core Academic teachers (such as Physical Education, Art, Foreign Language, Music, Technical/Career Education), Instructional Support (Media, Guidance, Data Coaches, and Reading Coaches). In general, the district subdivided instructional personnel based on whether the individuals have classroom or non-classroom assignments. If they have classroom duties, the committee further delineated whether personnel teach FCAT tested subject areas or only non-FCAT tested subject areas. Finally, the committee further subdivided the instructional personnel groups by their primary courses (e.g., World History) or grade levels taught (e.g., grade 1), and the assessment method used for their students. Other unique groupings were formed to address cases such as itinerant teachers, who are school-based but serve selected students in more than one school.

District-Based Instructional Personnel. Instructional personnel who are assigned to a central district work location may have a variety of very distinct job assignments. The committee differentiated groups based on criteria that considered (1) the non-school assignment status, (2) if all schools or specific schools, (3) the target group of students (all or specific subgroups), and the responsibility, if any, for a specific content

area. The chart below shows the different groupings based on the criteria. For example, School Psychologists are district-level personnel, yet may be assigned to work directly with a few specific schools and serve all of the students in those specific schools. Also, School Psychologists do not have instructional responsibility for any specific content/subject area or course. The chart below summarizes the differentiated groups. In this case, School Psychologists fall under the second category in the chart below.

Assignment	Schools Served	Students	Subject Area
District K-12	All	All	No specific subject
District K-12	Selected	All	No specific subject
District K-12	All	Selected	No specific subject
District K-12	All	All	Specific subject(s)
District K-12	All	Selected	Specific subject(s)
District K-12	Selected	All	Specific subject(s)
District K-12	Selected	Selected	No specific subject (s)

School-based Administrator Groupings. Administrators assigned to schools will be grouped by the level of their school: elementary, middle, or high. Assistant Principals working in K-12 schools will be assigned to the group (elementary, middle, of high) corresponding to their primary job responsibilities.

Methods for Determining Student Achievement for MAP

The methods of analyzing student scores for determining the student achievement component differs for each of the personnel groupings, and are described in the following sections.

For School-Based Instructional Personnel

Student achievement for classroom teachers will be determined based on: (a) the teacher’s primary course for the full-year assignment schedule (established in the first 6-week school period) and (b) the average achievement score for students assigned to the teacher and enrolled in the teacher’s primary course. For non-classroom

instructional personnel, analysis and calculation of the average achievement score will be based on the students they directly serve, or on all students school-wide, as appropriate. The specific analytical methods for calculating the average achievement scores for proficiency and gains determinations are described in more detail in the following sections.

Analysis of Student Proficiency. Depending on the particular assessment instrument and the type of scores generated, proficiency scores may be reported as a standard score, such as a 1 – 5 on the AP exam, a percentile score, or a percent correct on an end-of-course exam. In each case, it is appropriate to summarize scores by calculating an average across all scores for students in a particular group. For proficiency determinations, the average student achievement score will be calculated based on the sum of students' scores divided by the number of students, and adjusted by the students' prior academic performance. Mathematically adjusting for the students' prior achievement (using accepted statistical methods) is a way to strengthen the relationship between the teacher's impact on student scores on the MAP assessment by reducing the variability in student performance due to prior and non-related factors. In fact, the procedure results in an "adjusted average score." This method permits for more valid comparisons of average student achievement scores across teachers because the average achievement score has been adjusted for student factors not in the teacher's control prior to that student's assignment to his/her class/program/school.

Analysis of Student Gains. The district will employ district-developed value added tables following the state's model. Value tables assign points based on each student's achievement by his/her change in relative performance status (i.e., "gain") from one year to the next. In accordance with Value-Added Theory, the committee chose to value significant improvements more highly than modest improvements. A decline in performance is attributed no value or represents a deduction. The district will develop value tables for FCAT subject areas and for all other non-FCAT areas.

Based on actual student data, the District will create frequency tables to determine the likelihood of each student outcome, and value points will be set for each.

For example, the following value points might correspond to the following outcomes: a student who scored a Level 1 in 2006 and then scores a Level 3 in 2007 would receive 350 points; a student who declines from a Level 4 to a Level 3 would receive (minus) - 150 points, and a student who remains at a Level 1 is given zero (0) or no points. Each student will be associated with a value point based on his or her performance from one year to the next. Value points for students will then be linked to the teacher by a class or course and are summed and divided by the number of students in that particular class (or across sections of the same course for that teacher). Each teacher will be awarded an average value score for his/her primary course, subject area, or grade.

Weighting and Other Score Adjustments. Regardless of whether the achievement measure is based on proficiency status or learning gains, the calculation of a teacher's average student achievement score will be weighted to take into account factors such as:

- the number of schools served – one school or more than one school
- the grade levels included in the computation
- the class composition – one grade level (e.g. 4th grade only) or mixed grade levels (e.g., 3rd and 4th graders in one class)
- the number of students served
- the inclusion of more than one subject area scores (e.g., reading only or both reading and math scores)

For district-level instructional personnel

The district will employ district-developed value added tables following the state's model to determine student achievement gains for instructional personnel with district-wide responsibilities. The methodology described in the previous section for conducting the analysis using value tables will also be applied for the calculation of student achievement. The grades 3-10 FCAT achievement data will be used to calculate the student achievement component for district instructional personnel and for school-based administrators. Appendix B (referenced earlier in the assessment section) also

describes the methods for determining the student achievement component for district instructional personnel.

School-Based Administrators. The FCAT reading and mathematics results for all students school-wide will be the basis for calculating the student achievement component for MAP for school-based administrators. District-developed value tables will be used to determine the annual learning gains for all students by grade level and for each content area, reading and mathematics. The FCAT reading and mathematics scores will each contribute 50% to the calculation of the value score. Only the grade levels that correspond to the administrator's responsibility will be used (e.g., gains from grade 3 to grade 4, and from grade 4 to grade 5 will be the basis of gains for elementary school level administrators). The procedure for using value tables to determine the student achievement score for school-based administrators is as follows:

Identify all students who have current and prior year FCAT scores, by grade level and content area

Calculate value scores for students based on their FCAT performance from one year to the next

For each grade level and content area, sum the value scores for students and divide the sum by the total number of students to create an average value score

Repeat the calculations to obtain average value scores for each grade level and content area

Calculate a weighted average of all the grade/content average value score (i.e., an average of the averages)

The weighted average value score is generated by taking into account the proportion of students in each grade and by ensuring that reading and math components each contribute 50% to the final value score.

Using this process each school-based administrator will obtain a weighted average value score which will be used to determine the MAP points for the student achievement portion of MAP.

Computing the MAP Score

Each eligible staff member will have two components which comprises their MAP Score: the annual appraisal component (weighted 40%) and the student achievement component (weighted 60%). Therefore, the 1000 total possible number of MAP points is divided into two portions: 400/1000 points (i.e., 40%) and 600/1000 points (i.e., 60%), to correspond to the 40% - 60% requirement. The total MAP score is the sum of the points earned on the annual appraisal component (from 0 to 400) plus the number of points awarded on the student improvement component (from 0 to 600).

Annual Appraisal MAP Points Possible 0 – 400	+	Student Achievement MAP Points Possible 0 - 600	=	TOTAL MAP Possible 0 - 1000
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Because each achievement test generates a different type of score (e.g., percentile score, scale score, percent correct score, achievement level) and different assessments are used to determine student achievement, it is necessary to convert of the average student achievement scores associated with each eligible staff member onto a common scale or metric. Using a common scale allows for meaningful comparisons of student achievement within and across personnel groupings. In order to use the MAP point values (as shown above), the average student achievement scores are converted to a standard score and then placed on the MAP scale from 1 – 600, as follows:

- Separate the average student achievement scores for school-based and district-based instructional personnel and for school-based administrators by each of the groupings (i.e., using same assessment for their students or for students schoolwide);
- For each group, convert the scores to a standard z-score, which is an accepted statistical method of placing values on a common metric and normalizing the scale
- Normalizing the scale creates a grand mean of the average scores and expresses the average scores in terms of how many standard units it is above or below the mean (i.e., the standard z-score)
- Assign MAP points, ranging from 0 – 600, to each standard z-score

The table below shows the number of MAP points attributed to each standard z-score.

Converting standard z-scores to MAP Points

Standard z-score	MAP points	Standard z-score	MAP points
3 units below mean	0	.5 unit above mean	350
2.5 units below mean	50	1 units above mean	400
2 units below mean	100	1.5 units above mean	450
1.5 units below mean	150	2 units above mean	500
1 unit below mean	200	2.5 units above mean	550
.5 unit below mean	250	3 units above mean	600
At the Mean	300		

In summary, the step-by-step process to arrive at the MAP score is as follows:

1. Calculate the average student achievement score for each eligible member
2. Convert the average student achievement score to a standard z-score
3. Determine the number of MAP points corresponding to each z-score (this number is the MAP student achievement component)
4. Determine the number of MAP points based on the appropriate performance appraisal component
5. Add the number of MAP points from the performance appraisal and the student achievement component to get the total MAP score for that individual

Distribution of MAP Awards

The district will determine an amount equal to 5% of the district’s average teacher salary that will be available to provide MAP performance pay.

Awards shall be distributed from the district’s MAP allocation for 2007-08. The total amount appropriated (minus the portion allocated to Charter School) divided by the

sum of 5% of the average teacher salary plus social security tax, will equal the total number of awards possible.

The number of MAP awards possible will be distributed proportionally based on membership in each of five (5) key groups: Elementary School instructional personnel, Middle School instructional personnel, High School instructional personnel, central district instructional personnel, and school-based administrators.

Once the total number of awards available for distribution are determined for each of the five key groups, individuals within each group will be sorted based on their total MAP points from highest to lowest. Beginning with the highest MAP score, MAP recipients will be identified until the number of awards allocated to that specific group is exhausted.

If the point at which the number of awards are exhausted coincides with a MAP score that is tied with others below that cut-point, the recipient of the MAP award will be based on the district seniority date. For example, if 87 performance pay awards are available for elementary level instructional personnel, and if the 87th award is associated with a total MAP score of 490, earned by 5 individuals, then the person with the highest seniority will be the recipient of the MAP bonus.

Personnel who are eligible to receive the MAP awards will be notified no later than July 14, 2008. MAP awards will be encumbered by August 29, 2008, and be disbursed at the next available payroll. Eligibility for the MAP award is determined annually.

Procedures for Appeals

Any person who wishes to dispute their MAP status will submit a written notice to the MAP Appeals Review Committee from July 15 – August 8, 2008. The committee will review the stated concerns and make a final determination no later than August 22, 2008.