

## SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY AND IMPROVEMENT

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY IS COMMITTED TO MEETING THE HIGHEST STANDARDS OF FLORIDA'S SYSTEM OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND ACHIEVING THE MISSION AND GOALS OF THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY BASED ON THE PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS AND SCHOOLS. THE DISTRICT'S ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM WILL ALSO SUPPORT NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL GOALS AND STANDARDS AS DEVELOPED. THE STRATEGIC PLAN IS THE DISTRICT'S FRAMEWORK AND VEHICLE FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY. IN ORDER TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES AND FULLY IMPLEMENT THE VISION ARTICULATED IN THE SCHOOL BOARD'S *MISSION AND BELIEFS*, THERE IS A NEED FOR ACCOUNTABILITY AT ALL LEVELS OF THE ORGANIZATION TO IMPROVE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS. ACCORDINGLY, THIS POLICY DESCRIBES A COMPREHENSIVE ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM FOR THE BROWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT.

### DEFINITIONS

**Adequate yearly progress:** Florida's Accountability Legislation and No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 require that each district evaluate school's "adequate progress" using student performance data from the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). Schools judged not making adequate progress must be given District special assistance.

**Annual learning gains:** Florida defines positive annual learning gains based on FCAT results for students who maintain the same FCAT Level from one year to the next; for students who increase their FCAT Level from one year to the next; or for those students scoring in Level I or II who show substantial improvement from one year to the next but stay in the same level.

**District waiver:** A waiver recommended by the Superintendent and approved by the School Board that can be used by more than one school in the District without additional approval. Allows proven school waivers to be used by additional schools prior to making a policy change.

**Differentiated Accountability (DA):** In July 2008, Florida was selected as one of six states to pilot a differentiated accountability model. Florida's model merges the State's A++ school grading system with the No Child Left Behind requirements for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). Schools are identified under the DA model based on the number of years they have not met AYP, their school grade, and the percent of AYP criteria met. The District is required to allocate resources to schools identified under DA based on the level of need.

**Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT):** A standardized test uniformly administered throughout Florida to students in grades 3-11 for the purpose of accountability in the area of student achievement. The results are used to establish School Grades and as one of the criteria for identification under Differentiated Accountability.

**School Advisory Council (SAC):** The School Advisory Council shall be the sole body responsible for final decision-making at the school relating to implementation of ss.1001.42(18) and 1008.345. The SAC is composed of parents, teachers, community members, school administrators, non-instructional support staff, and other stakeholders who meet regularly to establish priorities, set annual objectives, and monitor action steps for school improvement.

**School Advisory Forum (SAF):** School Board policy requires that each school have a School Advisory Forum (SAF) composed of parents, teachers, community members, school administrators, non-instructional support staff, and other stakeholders. The SAF provides an opportunity for stakeholders to discuss and recommend actions on a variety of school issues.

**Educational Choice:** The program offers students who attended or who were assigned to attend failing public schools the option to choose a higher performing public school. A failing public school is a school that has received two “F” grades within a four-year period.

**School Improvement Plan (SIP):** A School Improvement Plan containing specific objectives and action steps for achieving Florida's educational goals is required by Florida. The SAC has the primary responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the annual SIP. The SIP must be approved by the School Board.

**School Grade:** Based on FCAT results and other criteria identified by the State of Florida and using a formula to assign points for specific levels of student performance, Florida assigns a School Grade to individual schools. Grades range from A to F.

**Secondary School Redesign:** Schools that primarily serve students in grades 6 through 12 are required to address the guiding principles for secondary school redesign in the annual preparation of the each school’s improvement plan.

**No Child Left Behind/School Public Accountability Report (NCLB/SPAR):** Schools are required by Florida law to create a report based on data from the previous school year and make that information available to the community at large. The report helps parents, and stakeholders, including business and community members, to evaluate the status of individual schools in a number of critical areas.

**Waiver:** Florida law requires each district school board to establish a process by which a school can ask for the setting aside of school-district policy, School Board-approved guidelines, or labor contract article for the purpose of school improvement. Waivers may result in permanent policy or contract changes if proven to be effective solutions to identified barriers.

## **RULES**

### **1. School Board Mission Statement**

- a. The School Board of Broward County, Florida, is dedicated to meeting the educational needs of all students in a safe learning environment.

### **2. School Board Belief Statements**

- a. Learning must take place at home, in school, and in the community.
- b. Learning is an important aspect of each person’s daily life.
- c. Learning is a lifelong process.
- d. We must provide educational opportunities from school readiness through adult education.
- e. Everyone is accountable for improving student achievement.
- f. All students will learn when their individual needs are met.
- g. Teaching all students how to learn is essential.
- h. We must prepare all students for a knowledge-based, technologically rich, and culturally diverse future.
- i. We must provide a safe and secure environment, which is essential for teaching and learning.
- j. We must treat all individuals with respect and dignity.

- k. Stakeholder involvement, which includes
- l. Partnerships with parents, community, businesses, and governmental agencies, enhances student achievement.
- m. Stakeholder involvement and input are valuable tools for decision-making.
- n. Professional development ensures a quality school district.
- o. We must promote cultural diversity and the reinforcement of positive character education.
- p. Responsible citizens are the foundation of a democratic society.

### **3. School Board Goals**

- a. Raise achievement of all students to ensure graduation from high school and readiness for post-secondary education.
- b. Improve the health and wellness of students and personnel.
- c. Provide a safe and secure physical and technological environment for students and employees.
- d. Promote innovation which focuses on best practices and quality efforts that improve our best-in-class position.
- e. Recruit, develop, retain, and recognize high performing and diverse faculty and personnel.
- f. Build strong partnerships with family, business, community and government at the classroom, school, area, and district level.
- g. Ensure district's leadership as an environmental steward through innovative ecology and energy conservation programs.

### **4. Accountability System Assumptions**

The following assumptions undergird the accountability system:

- a. School performance is a product of the combined efforts of the School Board and its governance policies, the administration, principals, teachers, support staff, students, parents, business, and the community.
- b. Continuous improvement is achieved by the District's adoption of an integrated management system based on quality principles such as focusing on customer needs, making decisions based on data analysis, and being results oriented.
- c. Performance is measured against the same high academic standards for all students. All schools are expected to perform at a level that reflects high expectations for students and staff. Schools, area offices, and District departments are expected to set priorities and to align resources in response to special challenges that impede student progress (e.g., extraordinary mobility; critical overcrowding, increasing numbers of students living at or below the poverty level; increased enrollment of non-English speaking students).
- d. Student achievement data from the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) in grades 3-11 shall be used to establish both proficiency levels and annual progress for individual students, schools, and the District (*F.S.C. 1008.33*).
- e. Schools are evaluated on current year performance as well as annual learning gains in student achievement (*F.S.C. 1008.345*).
- f. Schools with a history of low performance are expected to make adequate progress in improving student achievement. Ensuring adequate progress may require unequal resources to meet unequal needs of students/schools.
- g. There should be incentives for schools demonstrating high levels of performance and/or high levels of progress.
- h. Schools demonstrating low levels of performance and/or low levels of progress will receive District assistance and/or intervention (*F.S.C. 1001.42*).

### **5. School Board Responsibilities**

- a. Declare an emergency when one or more schools are failing or in danger of failing to make adequate progress and negotiate special provisions in contracts with the appropriate bargaining units to free

failing schools from contract restrictions that limit the school's ability to implement programs and strategies needed to improve student performance (*F.S.C. 1001.42*).

- b. Establish the criteria and process for selecting the SAC and approve membership lists prior to January of each school year (*F.S.C. 1001.452*).
- c. Approve School Improvement Plans (SIPs) annually (*F.S.C. 1001.42*).
- d. Monitor schools' efforts toward adequate progress as identified by standards of service and approved school improvement goals.
- e. Ensure, through the Superintendent, that administrative procedures are developed which provide early intervention and assistance in those schools where adequate progress criteria are not met (*F.S.C. 1001.42*).
- f. Report status of schools not making adequate progress to the Florida State Board of Education pursuant to state law (*F.S.C. 1001.42*).
- g. Develop partnerships and protocol with government and private agencies that enable schools to establish agreements with such community agencies.
- h. Set standards of service.

## **6. School Grades**

Broward County Public Schools school performance will be rated in accordance with all current State statutes and State Board of Education Accountability Rules as required in Florida's System of School Improvement and Accountability (*F.S.C. 1008.34*).

Schools will be identified according to the following School Grades per Florida's School Code (*F.S.C. 1008.34*):

- "A" schools making excellent progress
- "B" schools making above average progress
- "C" schools making satisfactory progress
- "D" schools making less than satisfactory progress
- "F" schools failing to make adequate progress

## **7. Incentives for Schools Demonstrating High Levels of Performance and/or High Levels of Progress**

- a. Schools designated with a grade of "A", schools that improve at least one performance grade, and schools previously designated with a grade of "F" that make substantial progress may be eligible for school recognition and financial awards under the provisions of the Florida School Recognition Program (*F.S.C. 1008.36*). School-based decisions concerning the distribution of financial awards shall be the responsibility of the School Advisory Council (SAC), shall be voted on by the faculty and staff (*F.S.C. 1008.36*), and shall be in accordance with procedures established by the Superintendent.
- b. Schools designated with a grade of "A" and schools having improved at least two performance grades may be given deregulated status (*F.S.C. 1008.345 and 1103.63*) if requested by the school. Implementation guidelines will be developed by the Superintendent.

## **8. District Intervention and Assistance for Schools Not Making Adequate Progress**

- a. The District shall be responsible for the monitoring and oversight to all designated Differentiated Accountability schools in accordance with Florida statutes, rules, and State Board of Education directives.
- b. The District shall allocate resources to all designated Differentiated Accountability schools in accordance with Florida statutes, rules, and State Board of Education directives.

## **9. Annual Reports of School and District Progress**

- a. Each school year, an individual No Child Left Behind (NCLB) School Public Accountability Report (SPAR) will be distributed as directed by state rules no later than the beginning of the school year.

A core part of each report will consist of key data elements approved by the Florida Board of Education and a report on the status of the School Improvement Plan objectives. These annual public disclosure reports shall include the school's student and school performance grade designation, school improvement rating, and performance data as specified in state board rules (*F.S.C. 1000.03 and 1001.42*).

- b. An aggregation of all schools' results will be published in an Annual Report of District Progress. The Annual Report of District Progress will highlight student achievement and school effectiveness, as well as district-wide progress on School Board Goals (*F.S.C. 1000.03*).
- c. Customer surveys will be conducted annually to provide feedback to schools, the administration and the School Board on the perception of students, parents, teachers, and members of the community concerning school effectiveness.

## **10. School Advisory Council (SAC)**

- a. The role of the SAC is to facilitate the development and monitor progress of the School Improvement Plan. Each SAC shall actively participate in the preparation of the school's annual budget and plan (*F.S.C. 1001.452*). The SAC chairperson shall sign the school budget when it is submitted for district budget preparation as an indication of SAC participation. A portion of funds provided in the annual General Appropriations Act for use by school advisory councils must be used for implementing the school improvement plan. SACs will operate using established administrative guidelines, as determined by the Superintendent.
- b. Each School Advisory Council (SAC) shall elect a SAC chairperson. The SAC shall formulate and adopt procedural bylaws (*F.S.C. 1001.452*). The Superintendent will provide each SAC with specific language that must be included in the bylaws to insure compliance with state statute and District policy. The District will maintain a file of current bylaws for each SAC (*F.S.C. 1001.452*). The operating procedures of the SAC will be based on consensus by school and community stakeholders including students, teachers, parents, administrators, and other school staff. The size of the SAC and length of term of membership is determined by consensus of the school and community.
- c. All meetings of the SAC must be open, advertised (at least three days advanced notice), and subject to the Sunshine Law (*F.S.C. 1001.452*). Minutes must be recorded, maintained, and posted for public review. Copies of the minutes, and attendance shall be sent to the Area Superintendent. A quorum must be present before a vote may be taken by the school advisory council. A majority of the membership of the council constitutes a quorum. (*F.S.C. 1001.452*). SAC meetings shall be scheduled at a time and location that will encourage participation from parent and community/business representatives. In addition to regularly scheduled SAC meetings, joint meetings shall be held semi-annually with the School Advisory Forum (SAF).
- d. All membership requirements must be in accordance with *FSC 1001.452*. The membership of each SAC will be approved annually by the School Board (*F.S.C. 1001.42*). Changes in SAC membership during the year must be reflected in the SAC recorded minutes and must be approved by the Area Superintendent and shall be reflected on SAC Composition Form.
  - 1. Team members shall include the school principal, teachers, the Broward Teacher Union (BTU) building steward (or designee), non-instructional support staff, SAF chairperson (or designee), students (required only at high schools and centers/technical schools), parents (not required at adult/technical centers), business and community representatives, a community school representative (when appropriate), an ESE parent, a parent of a Gifted student, and an ESOL parent. The teachers will represent a balanced number of representatives from each instructional team (including Pre-K).
  - 2. A majority (more than half) of SAC members shall not be employed by the Broward School District (*F.S.C. 1001.452*).
  - 3. SAC members will be elected by their peer groups (teachers by teachers, parents by parents, etc). The business and community representatives will be selected through a nomination and selection process facilitated by the principal and approved by the SAC (*F.S.C. 1001.452*).

4. The SAC must be representative of the school's student population and must include similar proportionate percentages from different ethnic groups. If the elected SAC is not representative of the school community, as determined by the principal and/or area superintendent, the SAC must devise and implement a process that insures proper representation (*F.S.C. 1001.452*).
  5. One parent shall be elected annually from each SAC to serve as an Innovation Zone Representative. The Zone Representative is responsible for attending Innovation Zone meetings.
  6. The SAC chairperson or designee shall represent SAC at Area Advisory meetings.
  7. The SAC chairperson or designee shall represent SAC as a voting member at School Advisory Forum (SAF) meetings.
  8. If a SAC member has two consecutive unexcused absences, he or she shall be replaced (*F.S.C. 1001.452*).
- e. **Training:** SAC members will engage in ongoing training activities to build the team, orient new members, develop skills, assist in the annual budget process, influence positive outcomes of its plan, especially student achievement results, and increase the capacity of the school to carry out the objectives of the SIP. School-based accountability funds allocated to the schools may be used to support these training efforts. The SAC may participate in joint training with the SAF.

## 11. School Improvement Plan (SIP)

- a. Each SAC will facilitate the development and monitor progress of the School Improvement Plan (SIP) that includes such specific components as baseline data, educational goals and objectives of the school, indicators of school and student progress, and strategies and evaluation procedures to measure adequate progress for each objective. School Improvement Plans will consist of objectives and action steps that are updated annually. Each plan will be based on a comprehensive needs assessment (including an analysis of student achievement and other school performance data) conducted by the SAC with the assistance of the school, area and district staff. The development of the SIP is the primary responsibility of the SAC (*F.S.C. 1001.42*). The majority of school improvement plan objectives will address student achievement data and the established Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test (FCAT) criteria for school grades set forth by the State Board Rules for the Florida System of School Improvement and Accountability. At least one SIP objective will target student achievement in the area of reading.
- b. Each SIP will include: (*F.S.C. 1001.42*)
  1. School mission;
  2. Necessary baseline data to identify needs;
  3. Expected student learning outcomes, including subgroups reported for Adequate Yearly Progress.
  4. Strategies and timeframes for improvement;
  5. Action steps relative to instructional strategies, budget, training, instructional materials, technology, staffing, student support services, and other matters of resource allocation (including waivers needed to existing School Board policy, Board approved program guidelines, labor, contract, or state statute);
  6. Necessary training, technical assistance, and support to plan, develop, and implement school improvement strategies;
  7. Applications for local, state and federal grants will be tied to SIP objectives;
  8. Each secondary school SIP must include a redesign component (*F.S.C. 1003.413*).
- c. New or additional SIP requirements will not be added by any District department or division except by changes to School Board Policy 1403. The SIP will be the school's strategic plan and will include all objectives considered most critical for continuous improvement.
- d. Completed SIPs will be reviewed by the Area Offices with assistance by appropriate district staff as directed by the Superintendent.
- e. SIP requirements, format designs, and administrative procedures will be evaluated ~~annually~~ by a School Improvement Task Force composed of representatives from schools, stakeholder groups,

District departments, and collective bargaining organizations for the purpose of recommending changes to the Superintendent.

- f. For schools identified under the Differentiated Accountability (DA) State Plan, SIPs must meet the DA requirements set by Federal and State Statute and the State Board of Education.

## 12. Waiver Requests

- a. The School Board will consider waiver requests submitted by SACs, through the Superintendent, for waivers of School Board policy, School Board-approved guidelines, and provisions of collective bargaining agreements required to implement school improvements (*F.S.C. 1001.42*).
  1. SAC waiver requests should be related to improved performance and should address Board policies, Board-approved guidelines and labor contracts that create barriers to successful implementation of the SIP objectives. The request must include a citation of the specific Board policy, School Board-approved guideline, or labor contract section; how granting the waiver will assist schools in improving performance outcomes; the identified outcomes will be evaluated. SAC waivers are not available for uniform issues. Duly authorized dress code waivers previously granted under Policy 1403 shall be grandfathered in for the next three years (beginning 2008-09), for a maximum of three years.
  2. To be recommended by the Superintendent of Schools to the School Board, each waiver request must be shared with the community at an advertised open meeting; approved by two-thirds (66 2/3%) of faculty members (if the waiver does not affect the entire school, by a two-thirds majority of the affected department or grade level teachers); and budget neutral, (i.e., able to be funded through normal school budgeting and expenditures). For the purpose of waiver review, an advertised open meeting will be a meeting scheduled for the sole purpose of reviewing specific waivers previously announced to the school's stakeholders. The Principal and the SAC Chair or designee must attend the open meeting. The scheduling and advertising of the meeting must be done so as to encourage maximum public participation and may take place before or after a regular SAC meeting, before or after a SAF or other parent group meeting, or before an extracurricular event at the school. The community meeting will be scheduled before the faculty vote. Input from the community meeting will be provided to the SAC. The SAC will either vote to approve the waiver request, revise it per community input and present the waiver to the faculty for a vote, or vote not to pursue the waiver. If the SAC votes to go forward with the waiver despite negative community input, this feedback will be presented to the School Board when the waiver is submitted for approval.
  3. A SAC must submit its waiver request to the appropriate Area Office for review.
  4. A Waiver Review Panel (comprised of District, area and other appropriate staff, representatives of employee bargaining agents, and stakeholder groups) will review each waiver request. Recommendations from the panel, including requests for labor contract impact negotiations, will be forwarded to the Superintendent.
  5. Each Waiver Request shall be reviewed and recommended by the appropriate Principal Executive Committee.
  6. Each Waiver Request shall be reviewed and recommended by the appropriate Area Superintendent.
  7. The Superintendent of Schools shall review each waiver request and submit those recommended to the School Board for approval. The Superintendent will not support waivers which do not reflect approval of two-thirds of all faculty members (or the affected teachers), review shared with the community at an advertised open meeting, those which are not budget neutral and those which do not support the District's mission and goals.
  8. The School Board will consider all waiver requests submitted by the Superintendent.
  9. Waiver requests may be approved for a five-year period contingent upon rigorous evaluation of the results. Schools granted a waiver shall conduct a faculty vote annually on whether to continue the waiver in accordance with the procedures set forth in Article Fifteen of the SBBC/BTU Contract. A continuation of a previously approved waiver must include an

- evaluation, (including relevant data, when appropriate), that substantiates that the waiver is resulting in improvement of the projected outcomes.
10. If two or more schools have implemented similar waivers that have positive outcomes based on the evaluation of multiple-year data, a recommendation may be made by Board members, appropriate Principals Executive Committees, or Area Superintendents to develop a district waiver. The process for developing a district waiver is illustrated in a flowchart that can be accessed on the School Improvement Department Website. The Superintendent may initiate and recommend that a "district waiver" be approved by the School Board. A district waiver allows interested schools to apply a standard waiver to a specific barrier identified by more than one or two schools. The provisions of policy requiring approval by two-thirds vote of the faculty and sharing of the waiver at a public meeting are required before a school can elect to participate in a district waiver. Schools will report annually to the Area Superintendent on their intentions to participate in a previously approved district waiver.
  11. Changes in School Board policy or contract provisions may be recommended by the Superintendent based on successful implementation of school waivers that result in successful outcomes or improved district efficiency.

Authority F. S. C. 1000-1008

POLICY ADOPTED: 3/21/95;

POLICY AMENDED: 6/4/96; 1/21/97; 5/6/97; 12/02/97; 07/21/98, 1/18/00; 12/12/00; 11/02; 05/06/03; 9/27/05; 3/4/08; 3/16/10