

# The **CORE** Initiative: **C**reating **O**pportunities to **R**eward **E**ducators

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What is The **CORE** Initiative?

**C**reating **O**pportunities to **R**eward **E**ducators is a five-year initiative funded through a grant from the United States Department of Education's Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF). The **CORE** Initiative is an innovative project designed to increase teacher and administrator effectiveness at eight high-need elementary schools through incentives and professional development which will result in improved student achievement. The incentive structure incorporated in **The CORE Initiative** will enable these high-need schools to recruit, reward, and retain the highly-effective teachers and administrators who are needed to engage and teach their students to succeed despite the many challenges they face.

### Which schools are participating in The **CORE** Initiative?

There are currently eight elementary schools participating in **The CORE Initiative**:

- Broadmoor Elementary School
- Carrie P. Meek/Westview K-8 Center
- Lakeview Elementary School
- Golden Glades Elementary School
- Miami Park Elementary School
- Nathan B. Young Elementary School
- Rainbow Park Elementary School
- Van E. Blanton Elementary School

### How do teachers become eligible for The **CORE** Initiative?

Teachers must be full-time (K-5) teachers and/or guidance counselors at identified **CORE** schools. All interested teachers and guidance counselors must "OPT-IN" by September 1<sup>st</sup> of each school year (applications are available at <http://www.prodev.dadeschools.net/core> under "Forms and Documents" – **CORE** Application to "OPT-IN"). Staff who are eligible to participate include kindergarten through fifth grade teachers, special area teachers, co-teachers, media specialists, and guidance counselors.

## What professional development is made available to CORE teachers who “OPT-IN” to The CORE Initiative?

All **CORE** professional development is focused on increasing student achievement. During years 1 – 5 of the grant, **CORE** professional development offerings are centered on providing strategies for improving classroom instruction, differentiating instruction and increasing rigor in the elementary classroom. Quarterly **CORE** training during the school year is provided in the areas of Reading, Language Arts, Science, and Mathematics. In years 3 – 5, additional trainings in the areas of art, music and physical education will be available for **CORE** special area teachers.

## What incentives are available to teachers?

- \$200 (per day) stipend during summer and Saturdays for attending professional development activities provided under the grant
- Performance-Based Incentives up to \$10,000 each year. (Progressive rollout beginning in years 2- 5)  
**Year 2:** K-5 core area teachers  
**Year 3:** Special area teachers  
**Years 4 & 5:** All subject and special area teachers
- Leadership Incentives for **CORE**- TIF Grade-level Leader (one per class level per school K-5): Additional compensation of \$750 annually
- Action Research Mini-Grants (up to 10 per school) relating to stimulating and improving student achievement: Compensation \$1,000 per teacher
- Professional Development Liaisons will receive a grant-funded supplement of \$1,000 per year in addition to the District-funded supplement of \$500 per year

## How does a teacher qualify for the Performance-Based Incentives?

There are three ways for teachers participating in **The CORE Initiative** to earn performance-based incentives (share distribution can be found at <http://www.prodev.dadeschools.net/core> under “Forms and Documents” – Performance Pay Incentive Guide)

### 1) **Percent of students achieving Proficiency**

- Proficiency is defined as:
  - Score of 3 or higher on the FCAT Reading and/or Mathematics test ( Grades 3 – 5) and/or FCAT Science test (Grade 5)
    - *Eligible: Teachers teaching grades 3-5*
  - Percentile score of 50 or higher on the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT) in Reading and/or Mathematics (Grades K – 2)
    - *Eligible: Teachers teaching grades K-2*

## 2) Percent of students making Growth

- Growth is defined as:
  - FCAT-TESTED GRADES
    - Improvement of at least one performance level (ex: level 1 to 2, 3 to 4, 4 to 5, 5 to 5) on FCAT Reading and/or FCAT Mathematics
      - Eligible: Teachers teaching in grades 4-5
      - May include grade 3 teachers (if enough eligible students with two years of FCAT results)

### Stanford Achievement Test (SAT)

- Improvement of at least one percentile score (ex: percentile 25 to 26)
  - Eligible: Teachers teaching in grades 1-2

## 3) Number of Students making Exceptional Student Growth

- Exceptional Growth is defined as:
  - FCAT-TESTED GRADES
    - Improvement of two or more performance levels (ex: 1 to 3, 2 to 4, 3 to 5)
      - Eligible: Teachers teaching in grades 4-5
      - May include grade 3 teachers (if enough eligible students with two years of FCAT results)

## What performance-based incentives are available for administrators at the CORE schools?

### Assistant Principals are eligible for the following:

- 5% performance-based incentive of total school payout for teachers
- \$225 stipend (per day) for attending summer professional development

### Principals are eligible for the following:

- 7.5% performance-based incentive of total school payout for teachers

## How will teachers know how many shares to expect as a result of their students' performance?

Participating teachers and administrators will confirm student rosters at the conclusion of both October and February FTE. Via the Teacher Portal, the **CORE** Application will be available for teachers to verify students who appear on their class roster. A webinar on how to access and utilize the tool may be viewed at <http://www.prodev.dadeschools.net/core> under "Presentations" - **CORE** PBCS Application.

## **When will the CORE teacher and administrator performance-based incentives be paid?**

Performance-based incentives are paid by late fall to early winter, after the analysis of relevant data by the M-DCPS Department of Assessment, Research and Data Analysis. Relevant data include the District-administered Stanford Achievement Test – 10 (SAT-10) in Mathematics and Reading in grades K – 2, and the state-mandated Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) in Reading, Mathematics in grades 3 -5 and Science in grade 5. Once the data are analyzed, teachers will receive a draft report and then will have ten business days to appeal incorrect information.

## **Where/How can I find out more information about The CORE Initiative?**

Feel free to view the **CORE** podcast at <http://www.prodev.dadeschools.net/core> under "Presentations" - Video OR contact Cindy Caldwell, Project Director at [cincaldwell@dadeschools.net](mailto:cincaldwell@dadeschools.net)