



FIVE
SCHOOL AWARD
STAR
Portfolio
Preparation
Guide

Revised September 2017

Sarasota County Schools
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PLEASE NOTE: This Guide typically is distributed at the training for the Five Star Coordinators from participating schools, which typically is conducted at the beginning of the school year. Therefore, the directions and instructions are written as though the reader is planning the collection of necessary data from the beginning of the academic year.

However, much of the information required for inclusion in the portfolio is documented in other records and, therefore, can be compiled from those sources at any time during the school year for the Five Star Portfolio.

PLEASE NOTE the requirements for SAC members' initials or signatures to document attendance; forms with "X" indicating attendance **do not meet the requirement.**

FIVE STAR SCHOOL AWARD GUIDELINES

This award was first offered by the Florida Department of Education in 1994-95. It was designed to recognize schools with exemplary programs that fully integrate the involvement of the following groups toward student improvement:

1. Community/Business/Agency Partners
2. Families/PTA/PTO
3. Volunteers
4. Student Community Service
5. School Advisory Councils (SAC)

In addition to recognizing outstanding schools, this award:

- identifies schools with programs that can be used as models for other schools, and
- serves as an assessment tool for schools to measure the success of their programs, whether the school meets all criteria or not.

QUALIFICATION PROCESS

PLEASE NOTE: A school must have a grade of C or above to apply (New schools may apply).

Only those schools meeting the requirements for *Golden School* are eligible to apply. *Golden Schools* must have:

1. documented volunteer hours equaling at least twice the student enrollment;
2. trained at least 80% of the faculty to work with volunteers;
3. designated a volunteer coordinator;
4. provided volunteer recognition; and
5. submitted a *Golden School form to the school district *Volunteer & Partnership Office*.

****Golden School Applications are provided to the school-based Volunteer Coordinator through the Volunteers Count! database to be completed and submitted through that database in May.***

Five Star School applicants must submit to the Volunteer & Partnership Office (VPO) a completed (1) ***Five Star application form*** and (2) **a portfolio documenting fulfillment of each of the criteria on the form**. The VPO provides the application form to the school's Five Star Coordinator in April. ***It is essential that the Five Star Coordinator uses this guide to compile the portfolio and not the application form.***

CRITERIA AND DOCUMENTATION

The criteria are rigorous. They are fully explained later in this guide. The activities used to meet the criteria may vary from school to school in the district. However, documentation must be complete and clear enough for someone not familiar with the school to understand. A narrative of what the school did is not sufficient.

REVIEW PROCESS

The school district Volunteer & Partnership Office will organize a team to review all portfolios and applications submitted. The applications from schools passing the portfolio review will be forwarded to Florida Department of Education for recognition, resulting in the issuance of a certificate of accomplishment. Representatives from these schools will be recognized in the fall of the following school year at a School Board meeting.

- The portfolio and a copy of the application should be kept at the school for possible DOE audit. Portfolios are available for pick-up from the Volunteer & Partnership Office after the review process is completed.
- Schools submitting portfolios that did not meet the required standards will receive an explanation of what was lacking.
- Each portfolio will be evaluated by a member of the Portfolio Review Team. Review Team members will not review their own school's portfolio.
- All schools providing appropriate documentation that meets the criteria will receive the Five Star School award. There is no limit to the number of schools that may receive this award.
- Reviewers may include School Board members, district administrators, principals, school-site volunteer coordinators, other faculty/staff from schools, PTA/PTO members, and *TeamUP Volunteer & Partnership Council* members. All schools are offered an opportunity to send reviewers. All reviewers receive an orientation and are assisted by experienced reviewers.

PLANNING MAKES IT EASIER

At first, compilation of the Five Star portfolio may appear difficult and time consuming. In reality, most schools are in the habit of planning for community involvement through their School Improvement Plan (SIP). They are also in the habit of monitoring their progress toward those goals throughout the year. If schools approach the portfolio preparation in the same manner and as part of their SIP documentation, it becomes a very manageable task.

Two of the most important criteria you must plan to accomplish and document are Golden School volunteer hours and School Advisory Council meetings. Attendance minimums must be met and documented. These two criteria are inflexible and care must be taken to document them throughout the year!

- Decide in the fall that you will apply.
- Establish an official SAC/SDMT to meet the requirements for the award.
- Establish a Five Star Committee and designate a coordinator in the fall. Review the criteria and make a list of planned activities that will meet each of them. List the documentation you will need for each activity. Make the documentation part of the activity plan.
- If there are criteria for which you have no activities scheduled, plan them now.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Divide responsibility for collecting documentation among several people on the committee.
2. Each person must collect the documentation for the planned activities listed in their section.
3. Write or paste the criterion addresses on each page.
4. As documentation is collected, it should be labeled and checked off the list.
5. Engage the assistance of others who will be directly involved with each of the activities.
6. Meet periodically to check the progress and to add new activities to the lists.
7. In March gather the documentation and put it in numerical order. Go through the criteria to see if you have sufficient documentation listed under each one. If a single document applies to several criteria, copy it and insert it in each of the appropriate sections. There will still be time to plan activities or locate documentation.
8. Compile the portfolio for submission in May.
9. When you have questions, contact the Volunteer & Partnership Office or the Five Star Trainer for guidance.

THE APPLICATION FORM

SECTION I: Complete the front page of the application provided to you by the Volunteer & Partnership Office. Some areas have been completed for your convenience.

SECTION II:

- **Criteria Checklist** - Place a “√” in the blank next to each criterion your school has documented in the portfolio. You must address each criterion in this section.
- **Documentation of Accomplishment** – Check “Yes” in this section:
A portfolio documenting the accomplishment of each of the criteria is available at the school site. Yes ___ No ___.
Check yes on the application form. Once reviewed, the portfolio will be returned to you and should be retained at your school, along with a copy of the application. The portfolio is subject to audit from Florida DOE.
- **School Impact Data and Community Involvement Best Practice sections** – These are the only two sections that must be typed in by the person that is preparing the Five Star Notebook.
 1. **School Impact Data - What proof can you provide that the community’s involvement with your school improved students’ academic work, their attendance or their behavior?**
This is part of the application. **It must be a quantitative (measurable) statement that shows a statistical improvement in students’ academics, attendance, or behavior as a result of community involvement.** Examples –
“McDonald’s, our business partner, provided a free burger to each child with perfect attendance during the month. Attendance has improved 20% over last year. Last year the average daily attendance was 75% and 50 students missed more than 20 days. This year the average is 95% and only one child missed more than 20 days.”
The mentors from Big Brothers Big Sisters met weekly, throughout the school year, 1:1 with 50 select students who had five or more behavioral referrals per month. At the end of the year, 45 of the 50 students had completed the mentoring program. Of the 45, 40 had reduced their behavioral referrals to zero per month.
 2. **Community Involvement Best Practice – Summarize a community involvement best practice initiated by your school to increase student achievement.** This is the other criterion that can be addressed through narrative **and must include supporting data.** This is a new initiative each year. Example –
Community volunteers, trained in the *Mastering Multiplication Facts* program, met weekly with all sixth grade students for 16 weeks to implement the program. At the end of the program, all participating students increased their multiplication facts mastery from an average of 34% to 85%.
- **Certify and Sign** - The person preparing the form/portfolio, the principal, and the School Advisory Council Chairman should sign the form and fill in their respective lines. The Volunteer & Partnership Office will secure the District Specialist's and Superintendent's signatures.

NOTE: Make one copy of the completed application for your school records and insert the original application in your Five Star Portfolio before submitting it to the Volunteer & Partnership Office for review.

THE PORTFOLIO

The Portfolio information should be displayed in a simple three-ring binder.

- The portfolio will be reviewed by someone who is unfamiliar with your school. Please be sure the material is clear and well-marked.
- Separate the major sections and clearly identify them: Community/Business Partnership, Family Involvement, Volunteers, Student Community Service, and School Advisory Council.
 1. Each criterion is numbered in this Guide to reflect the sections on the application. One way of keeping the documentation organized is by using colored self-adhesive dots to number them. *Example:* You may have several business partnership contracts and each will have the same color dot with "I. a." written on it.
 2. Place documentation in sequence according to sections and criteria in the application:
 - I. a. - h. Community/Business Partnership
 - II. a. - i. Family Involvement
 - III.a. – d. Volunteers
 - IV.a. - b. Student Community Service
 - V. a. - f. School Advisory Council (School Advisory Council/School Decision Making)
 3. Highlight the applicable section (e.g., II.a.) on a document such as a newsletter, agenda or minutes.
- Photos and/or small items should be firmly affixed or inserted into a photo album page.
- If a single document applies to several criteria, **copy it and insert it in each of the appropriate sections**. Example: A newsletter with articles about a volunteer recognition program, announcement of an SAC presentation, or a parent education event would be inserted in three places with the appropriate article highlighted.
- For clarity you may wish to insert a list of activities and a brief explanation, if needed, at the beginning of a section. Include the criteria numbers. This page is to clarify the documentation for the reviewer who is not familiar with your school's activities. It cannot replace documentation, only enhance it.

PLEASE NOTE: Throughout the criteria explanation section of this guide, the criteria are written in bold and the key words are underlined in order to better assist you. Please note those items that are **REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION**

I. COMMUNITY/BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP

Contact your school's Community/Business Partner Coordinator to collect the documentation for each of the criteria listed in this section.

The purpose of the Community/Business Partnership section is to demonstrate that the school has formed true partnerships with the local community. The school and the "business" each are giving and receiving something. Civic clubs, non-profit or government agencies, and colleges can also be considered business partners. Most partnerships are ongoing relationships. The dry cleaner who donated \$10 toward the incentive award program is not a partner. You don't need an agreement for an occasional small donation.

- a. **Each community/business/agency partner signs an annual, jointly-developed plan of partnership activities with the school.**

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

At least one signed agreement with a current year's community/business partners. Agreement must be signed by partner and School Business Partner Coordinator

- b. **Community/business/agency partner maintains an ongoing, active relationship with school.**

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

At least one signed agreement with a community/business partner who is involved with repetition of same or similar activity or a variety of kinds of activities.

- c. **Community/business/agency partner is involved in development and implementation of School Improvement Plan (SIP).**

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

Signed agreement with a community/business partner who is a member of the School Advisory Council along with proof of the partner's regular attendance at SAC meetings in which the SIP was developed or SAC roster with highlighted names of community/business/agency on attendance sheets.

- d. **Community/business/agency partnership supports teaching and learning through the donation of human resources and goods/services or financial resources.**

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

Signed agreement with a community/business/agency partner with area highlighted that shows the partner's support of teaching and learning through the donation of human resources, goods/services, and/or financial resources.

e. School designates a community/business/agency partnership coordinator.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

Principal's letter, memo, or email appointing the school's community/business/agency partner coordinator.

f. School provides opportunities for community/business partners to receive orientation and training.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

Documentation that this orientation/training session took place to discuss the needs of the school. This can be done in a group or individual setting. Provide information or brochures about the school to potential partners.

Suggested Documentation:

Cover letter of business partner information packet, invitation, sign-in sheet or photos regarding orientation event for community/business partners.

g. Community/business partnership coordinator and school staff receive training during the year on effective use of services by business partners.

The Business Partner Coordinator attends the annual district-level Business Partner Coordinator training. Then the business coordinator must train the staff of their schools about how the business partner program works at the school.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION – Both items

1. Certificate of attendance from the annual Business Partner Coordinator training conducted by the school district's Volunteer & Partnership Coordinator.
2. Faculty meeting agenda highlighted that shows follow-up training by school Business Partner Coordinator **OR** letter from principal stating the training date and percentage of faculty attendance.

h. School provides recognition of community/business partners.

Suggested Documentation:

- Copy of award certificates
- Photos of events and school marquee
- Highlighted news articles
- Invitation to recognition event
- Recognition event program
- Flyers listing sponsors of events

II. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

The purpose of this section is to demonstrate that the school has involved the families of its students in the educational process. Research shows that parental involvement has a positive effect on student performance.

a. Active parent organization (PTA/PTO/PTSO/Boosters, etc.)

Suggested Documentation:

- Attendance Roster
- Calendar and minutes of meetings

b. Education opportunities are offered to families (e.g., Sunshine State Standards, literacy, career planning, parenting, homework assistance)

This could include computer classes, CPR, good nutrition on a budget, budgeting, or other practical information.

Suggested Documentation:

- Highlighted newsletters
- Handouts
- Sign-in sheets
- PTA/PTO meeting agendas when applicable
- Flyers announcing sessions
- Photos

Suggested Activities:

- FCAT Family Night
- Literary events
- Science fairs

c. Focus/discussion/support groups are offered to families (e.g., parenting, drug awareness, safety, violence prevention, etc.).

Suggested Parent Workshops:

- Drug prevention
- Gang awareness
- Violence prevention
- Groups for parents of ESE or ESOL students
- For parents coping with divorce, death or serious illness
- Counseling services

Suggested Documentation:

- Highlighted newsletter articles
- Agenda/handouts
- Flyers announcing events
- Photos

d. **Joint parent and student training (e.g., academic skills, family reading, violence prevention, financial aid) is available.**

Suggested Activities:

- Family reading or math night
- Junior Great Books
- Math Super Stars
- Conflict resolution
- Peer mediation, conflict resolution, or other home- directed opportunities
- Violence or drug prevention
- Successful test taking strategies
- Parenting class with students invited
- FCAT Family Night

Suggested Documentation MUST verify parent AND student participation:

- Highlighted newsletter articles
- Agendas/programs, handouts
- Photos
- Sign-in sheets

e. **Family outreach activities are offered through collaborative or facilitated activities (e.g., neighborhood meetings, tutorial services, off-site or off-campus programs).**

Suggested Activities/Documentation:

- College night at Robarts Arena
- Home visits by faculty members
- Flyers
- Sign-in sheets
- PTA/PTO meeting at a community center
- Photos
- Highlighted newsletter articles
- Correspondence with collaborating groups

f. **A minimum of 60% of families are involved in a positive way in the school more than once during the year.**

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

Principal's letter/memo stating the percentage of families (a minimum of 60%) participating in a positive way.

Suggested Activities/Documentation:

- Open House
- Photos
- Sign-in sheets
- Acknowledgement/thank you letters stating percentage of attendance
- School Fundraisers – book fair, jog-a-thon
- Concerts and sporting events
- Highlighted newsletter articles

g. **Evidence of a variety of communication techniques with families by teachers and school staff.**

Suggested Documentation (submit at least 2 examples):

- School newsletters
- Classroom newsletters
- Connect Ed Reports/Log
- Web site addresses
- Marquee
- Flyers

h. Ensure that welcome signage is near the entrance and any other interaction with parents creates a climate in which parents feel valued and welcome.

Suggested Documentation:

- Photos of welcome signs
- Bulletin boards
- Photos of marquee

i. Provide parents with current information regarding school policies, practices and both school and student performance.

Suggested Documentation:

- Student agenda books/school folders
- Photos of marquee
- Connect Ed reports
- Newsletters

III. VOLUNTEERS

a. A minimum of 80% of the school staff have participated in an information session/training about the school's volunteer program during the school year.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

1. Agenda or letter from principal stating date the meeting was held and
2. A memo from the principal that a minimum of 80% of faculty attended.

b. School volunteer coordinator has been designated to provide leadership for the school volunteer program through recruitment, placement, training, and supervision of participants.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

1. Letter or memo from principal appointing the Volunteer Coordinator.
2. Proof that Volunteer Coordinator attended the district-level annual Volunteer Coordinator training.

c. Total number of hours in volunteer service equals twice the number of students enrolled in the school. (Any volunteer activity that contributes to student improvement may be counted.)

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

Includes copy of the Golden School form sent to Volunteer & Partnership Office in the spring, highlighting that the total number of hours in volunteer service equals twice the number of students enrolled in the school.

d. School provides recognition of volunteers.

Suggested Documentation:

- Highlighted newsletter articles
- Invitation to an event
- Other photos
- Volunteer of the Month
- Thank you tokens of appreciation
- Program/agenda from the event
- Photo of marquee announcement/event
- Thank you letters or notes
- Marquee Recognition
- Recognition on bulletin board

IV. STUDENT COMMUNITY SERVICE

a. School provides opportunities to students for service learning that focus on identified community needs (e.g., renovating a park, working at election polls, feeding homeless).

Service learning requires that students learn about a community need and then develop and implement a project to address the need. The project must be **conceived and implemented by the student(s)**.

Suggested Documentation – MUST VERIFY IDEA AND IMPLEMENTATION BY STUDENT(S):

- Lesson plans
- Club agenda
- Photos
- Teacher bulletins
- Minutes from club meetings
- Student Council project
- Flyers
- Highlighted newspaper/newsletter articles

b. A minimum of 50% of students are involved in community activities (e.g., pen pals to shut-ins, food drives, cross school tutoring activities).

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

Principal's letter/name stating the percentage of students involved in the community activities.

Suggested Activities/Documentation:

- Photos
- Project samples
- Log of activities
- Teacher bulletins
- Pennies for Pasta
- Highlighted newsletter articles
- Correspondence/thank you letters
- Principal or teacher letter stating percentage of involvement
- Beach cleanup

NOTE: The difference between IV.a. and IV.b. is that the **students** (with staff) initiate the activity in IV.a. based on information which comes to them or their observation of needs in the community. Criterion IV.b. requires quantitative documentation that a minimum of 50% of all students in the school were involved in community projects during the year.

V. SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

The school-based Five Star Coordinator should provide the V.a. through V.f. criteria to the SAC chairperson before the first SAC meeting so that he/she will know the requirements and help gather the documentation for the Five Star portfolio. The Five Star portfolio is due in May.

a. Minimum of eight meetings held per year. Average 80% attendance of members.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

1. Official School Advisory Council Nomination Form with names submitted to district.
2. Attendance sheet signed or initialed by member (Samples of both forms follow this section of the Guide).

b. Annual presentation of School Improvement Plan (SIP) to school community after public notice to all stakeholders (school marquee, flyers, etc.) is made.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

1. Copy of the public notice of the annual presentation of SIP.

Parents, faculty/staff, students, neighborhood are the stakeholders. They need to know when the SIP will be presented. In notifying the stakeholders, you must show that information was provided to the entire school community. The message may need to be spread in several ways to reach them all. For example, the marquee does not reach parents of students from satellite areas. There must be evidence that the presentation was made.

Suggested Documentation:

- Flyers
- Post SIP on school website
- Connect Ed Report
- Highlight newsletter articles
- Photo of marquee announcement

c. Evidence of ongoing training and/or development of the School Advisory Council (SAC) is available.

Suggested Documentation – MUST VERIFY ONGOING TRAINING:

- Certificate from the district-level annual SAC Orientation training for school SAC members.
- SAC agendas highlighting follow-up training of SAC members at the school

d. School Improvement Plan reflects one NEW idea that INVOLVES THE COMMUNITY in its implementation.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

Copy of the section of school SIP that describes the one new community involvement activity with activity highlighted

Suggested Activities/Documentation:

- Science Fair judging
- Multicultural Fair
- Grants
- Flyers
- Head Start activities
- Program rewards/incentives from business partners
- Parent involvement activities
- Highlighted newsletter articles
- Recognition assemblies
- School uniforms

e. School Advisory Council participated in the development and/or interpretation of the needs assessment data.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

Highlighted minutes or agendas that demonstrate the sharing of Needs Assessment data with SAC members.

DOCUMENTATION MUST VERIFY SAC PARTICIPATION IN NEEDS ASSESSMENT.

f. Training provided for staff and SAC members on collaborative partnering and shared decision-making.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

- Highlighted agenda item documenting that SAC members and staff worked together to monitor and evaluate the collaborative partnering and shared decision-making process.
- Sign-in sheets and/or minutes documenting training presentations.

Must Haves!
Five Star School Award

1. Write or paste the criterion at the top of each page (number and
2. Highlight areas of documentation that refer to a particular criterion.
3. The information submitted in portfolio fulfills the criteria without question, for example,
 - a. Criterion Ic. - Use a copy of the official roster and highlight the business partner/community member's name to document that this person is a member of SAC and is one of the SAC members who helped develop the school's SIP.
 - b. Criterion If. - Document that the business partner received orientation/training by the school's principal/business coordinator. An invitation or thank you note to the business partner from the school will suffice as documentation.
 - c. Criteria IIf. and IVb. - Use letter from principal stating % of attendance to serve as documentation.
 - d. Criterion IIh. - Photo of Welcome Signage.
 - e. Criterion Va. - Both the official SAC roster and the SAC attendance sheet are required. A minimum of 8 SAC meetings is required, if possible, before portfolio due date.
 - f. Criterion Vb. --Do not need a copy of the SIP, just documentation that the notification to the public was done on the school's web site, marquee or flyer.
 - g. Criterion Vf. --Document that training occurred for both staff and SAC members on collaborative partnering and shared decision-making. Provide agenda to document topic and sign-in sheet to document attendance.

Helpful Hints for the Five Star Portfolio Coordinator

1. First, carefully review the qualifications. The school must be “C” or above. It must also meet requirements for the Golden School Award. (Requirements are detailed on page 1 of the Preparation Guide.)
2. Decide who will serve on your Five Star Committee:
 - Business coordinator
 - Volunteer coordinator
 - SAC chairperson
 - Booster/PTO president
 - Principal
 - Assistant principal
 - Photographer
 - Portfolio coordinator
3. Have a meeting as soon as possible to establish the criteria, calendar of events/activities, and who will be responsible for each section.
4. Establish deadlines. Given that the portfolio is due to the district-level Volunteer & Partnership Office in May, establish a deadline for school staff and others to get the materials to the Five Star Coordinator in enough time to assemble them.
5. Limit your documentation of the requirements and enhancements (photos, newsletters, etc.) to one page or event. For example, you don’t need to provide a copy of every newsletter for the year. Your portfolio will become too cumbersome. All documentation must fit in one 3-ring binder. *Page 5 of the guide indicates that you may have several pieces of documentation but you don’t have to show them all. You can also reduce and overlap several on one page.
6. Provide clear objectives for each page. Write or paste the criteria to the top. Remember, someone who is not familiar with your school will be reviewing your portfolio.
7. Make two copies of your completed and signed application. Submit one copy of the application with the portfolio. This will go to Florida DOE. After the portfolio is reviewed, the Volunteer & Partnership Office will return it to you. The portfolio and another copy of your application should remain at your school site for possible DOE audit.
8. You can reduce the size of the documentation to provide more than one piece on a page.
9. Highlight area(s) applicable to that particular criterion. For example, if you have a meeting agenda, highlight only that portion of the meeting. Do all highlighting AFTER you reduce your pages. Highlighting before makes it too dark to see on reduced pages.
10. You can use a single document in several areas. Copy and highlight the particular criterion it meets.
11. Start thinking now about your quantitative statistics statement for the application. **“What proof can you provide that the community’s involvement with your school improved students’ academic work, their attendance or their behavior?”** (See the example statement on page 4 of the Preparation Guide.)
12. Displaying the best of your school through this portfolio provides a great resource for parents to look through when waiting for an appointment.
13. Use acid free paper, cardstock, and adhesives. If you’re going to put in all this work and time, you may as well make it last.
14. Consider becoming a district-level reviewer this year. Reviewing portfolios from other schools can give you ideas for the following year and helps refine your documentation.

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Sarasota, Florida

Modified by the Volunteer & Partnership Office from a document prepared by **SERVE**