

# Broward County School District (Ft. Lauderdale, FL)

**GPA: 1.87**

**Rank: 21st place out of 50**

*Document Examined: Collective bargaining agreement, July 1, 2006 – August 15, 2007\**

Data from the NCTQ database were drawn from Broward County's July 1, 2006 – August 15, 2007 bargaining agreement. The authors have confirmed that a new contract was approved in November 2007. In the interest of maintaining a clear, consistent, and reliable standard for the data analyzed in this report, however, we have adhered to NCTQ's coding. Find a more detailed explanation of this approach on page 14.

HIGHLY FLEXIBLE
FLEXIBLE
SOMEWHAT FLEXIBLE
<b>SOMEWHAT RESTRICTIVE</b>
RESTRICTIVE
HIGHLY RESTRICTIVE

## Introduction

This study of the nation's fifty largest school districts starts from a simple premise: district labor agreements should not make it difficult for schools to be nimble, smart, flexible, high-performing organizations.

In particular, the study focuses on provisions that may limit school leaders' ability to attract and retain excellent teachers, to identify and remove ineffective instructors, to use professional development as a tool of organizational improvement, and to manage school operations in a professional manner—i.e., to run the most effective school possible in terms of core instructional and educational activities, crucial areas where school leaders need enough authority to match their mounting accountability obligations and executive responsibilities in a results-based era.

## The Grades

The scale on which districts were graded reflects the approach outlined above. Grades of A or B generally indicate provisions that confer on school leaders the latitude to manage their schools in a professional manner. A grade of C generally means the agreement is silent regarding the provision in question—i.e., it neither affirms nor denies a school leader's right to take a specific course of action. Grades of D and F generally indicate provisions that impede or explicitly bar school leaders from exercising discretion in a given area. Broward County's overall grade, therefore, reflects the degree to which district policies constrain school leaders' ability to make decisions on important management issues. It is in no way a holistic assessment of local education policy or school leadership, much less of school effectiveness.

## Overall GPA: 1.87 (21st place out of 50)

Broward County's GPA is the average of its scores in three areas: Compensation, Personnel Policies, and Work Rules.

Broward County receives a disappointing Somewhat Restrictive rating for its 1.87 GPA, ranking twenty-first among the fifty districts studied—and fifth among the nine Florida districts examined here. The district grants school leaders substantial flexibility regarding teacher compensation, although the one F it receives in that category hurts its grade. It does less well in Personnel Policies and Work Rules.

## Compensation: C+ (71st percentile)

The Compensation grade combines four components: Credit for Previous Experience, Performance Pay, Hardship Pay for High-Needs Schools, and Extra Pay for Shortage Subjects.

Broward County's bargaining agreement gives schools the flexibility to raise starting teacher salaries based on previous experience teaching in a private school or college or working

<b>Compensation</b> . . . . .	<b>C+</b>
1. Credit for Previous Experience . . . . .	A
2. Performance Pay . . . . .	B+
3. Hardship Pay for High-Needs Schools . . . . .	B
4. Extra Pay for Shortage Subjects . . . . .	F
<b>Personnel Policies</b> . . . . .	<b>C</b>
5. Tenure . . . . .	N/A
6. Evaluation. . . . .	A
7. Layoffs . . . . .	C
8. Transfers . . . . .	F
<b>Work Rules</b> . . . . .	<b>D-</b>
9. Professional Development . . . . .	F
10. Subcontracting Operations† . . . . .	C
11. Faculty Meetings . . . . .	D
12. Teacher Leave . . . . .	F

in a subject-related field. It also allows schools to reward teachers on the basis of performance and for teaching in high-needs schools, though it limits the amount they may pay. The contract receives one F in this category for barring schools from rewarding teachers of shortage subjects.

### **Personnel Policies: C (65th percentile)**

The Personnel Policies grade combines four components: Tenure, Evaluation, Layoffs, and Transfers.

Broward County's contract grants school leaders the right to factor student performance, including test scores, into teacher evaluations. It is silent on whether, during layoffs, school leaders may retain an outstanding young teacher over one with greater seniority and whether transferring teachers may "bump" less senior teachers from their jobs. The contract gets low marks for requiring school leaders to choose the most junior teacher in a certification area if transfers are necessary and for requiring internal job applicants to be given priority over new hires for vacant positions. Tenure rules in Broward County, as in most places, are set by state law, not local decision; therefore, the district did not receive a grade for that component

### **Work Rules: D- (29th percentile)**

The Work Rules grade combines four components: Professional Development, Subcontracting Operations, Faculty Meetings, and Teacher Leave.

Broward County's bargaining agreement receives an F for requiring schools to give teachers stipends for professional development activities outside the scheduled workday. The agreement is silent on whether school leaders may subcontract school operations to nonunion workers and whether the length of faculty meetings is capped. It does, however, require time at faculty meetings to be allotted to union matters, dropping it to a D for that component. The contract receives an F for requiring school leaders to grant teachers leave to attend union activities.

### **Conclusion**

Broward County provides some flexibility for its school leaders in a few areas but very little in others. Apart from its three high marks in the Compensation category, there is substantial room for improvement across the board. To better equip its school leaders with the flexibility they need to manage their schools effectively, the School Board of Broward County should negotiate aggressively to make contract changes that explicitly confer on school leaders the right to:

1. reward teachers of shortage subjects. (The bargaining agreement bars this practice.)
2. base decisions regarding teacher layoffs on individual merit and performance rather than seniority. (The bargaining agreement is silent on this issue.)
3. base decisions regarding teacher transfers on individual merit and performance rather than seniority. (Of the three indicators directly addressing teacher transfers, the bargaining agreement requires school leaders to consider seniority on two and is silent on one.)
4. subcontract (i.e., outsource) certain school operations. (The bargaining agreement is silent on this issue.)

#### **In addition, the board should amend provisions that:**

5. mandate that teachers be given stipends for professional development activities outside the scheduled workday.
6. require time at faculty meetings to be allotted for union matters.
7. allow classroom teachers to miss instructional time in order to attend union activities.

\* The data examined in this report come from the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) database, "Teacher Roles, Rules and Rights." All data were culled from the NCTQ database in November 2007. In states that permit collective bargaining, NCTQ examined collective bargaining agreements, with the exception of Jordan School District in Utah, which does not have a bargaining agreement. In states where collective bargaining is either illegal or otherwise not practiced, NCTQ examined school board policies. Where a provision in state law precludes the possibility of a collective bargaining agreement or school board policy addressing a certain component in our study, we excluded it from our analysis, marking the component "N/A." Find a more detailed explanation of this report's methodology starting on page 14.

† This indicator refers to the right of school leaders to outsource school operations to nonunion workers. NCTQ uses the term "subcontracting" in its database, which we retain here in the interest of consistency.