



School Recognition Program

What is the Florida School Recognition Program?

The Florida School Recognition Program provides public recognition and financial awards to schools sustaining high student performance or schools that demonstrate substantial improvement in student performance.¹

Which schools are eligible?

Public schools, including charter schools, that receive a school grade of “A,” improve at least one letter grade from the prior year, or improve more than one letter grade and sustain the improvement the following year are eligible for awards.² In addition, alternative schools that maintain an “Improving” rating or improve at least one improvement-rating level are eligible.³

What do schools receive from the School Recognition Program?

Eligible schools receive a financial award based on the availability of appropriated funds and the number and size of schools eligible to receive an award.⁴

Schools earning a school grade of “A” or improving at least two letter grades have increased authority over the allocation of the school’s budget, including, but not limited to, allocation of instructional staff and the acquisition of instructional materials, equipment, and technology.⁵

How many schools received school recognition awards in 2010?

In 2010, 1,499 elementary and middle schools, including schools serving grades lower than grade 12, but not including high schools, received \$83,800,067.⁶

¹ Section 1008.36(2), F.S.; Florida Department of Education, *Florida School Recognition Program: Frequently Asked Questions*, <http://www.fldoe.org/faq/default.asp?ALL=Y&Dept=177>, (last visited Jan. 9, 2011) [hereinafter *School Recognition FAQs*].

² Section 1008.36 (2) and (3), F.S.

³ Section 1008.341(2), F.S. (flush left provision at the end of the subsection); s. 1008.34(4), F.S. see School Grades Fact Sheet. A school that serves any combination of students in kindergarten through grade 3 which does not receive a school grade because its students are not tested and not included in the school grading system receive the school grade designation of a K-3 feeder pattern school, if at least 60 percent of the students in the school serve a combination of students in kindergarten through grade 3. Section 1008.34(3)(b)3., F.S.

⁴ Section 1008.36(4), F.S.

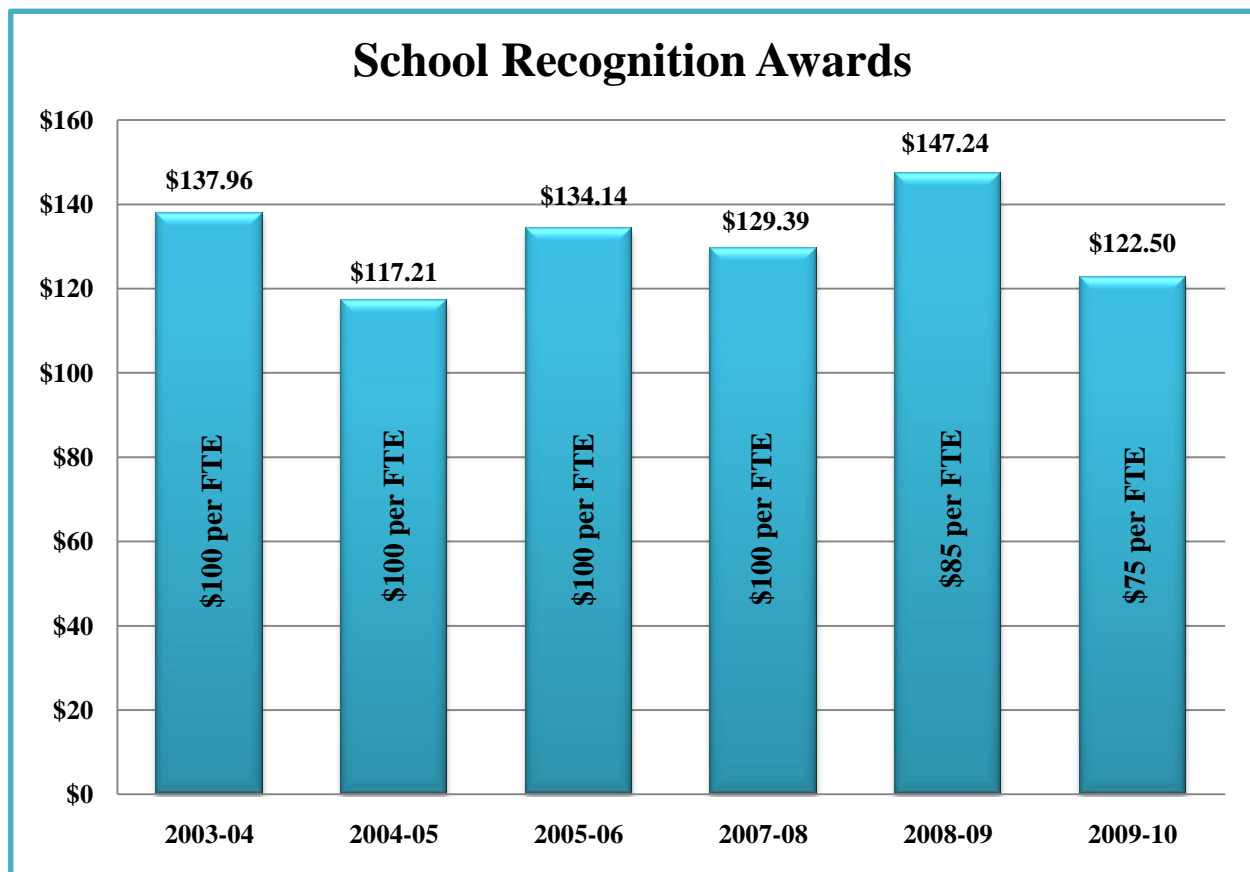
⁵ Section 1008.34(2) F.S.; rule 6A-1.09981(10)(b), F.A.C.

⁶ *School Recognition FAQs*, *supra* note 1. Because high school grades were not released until December 2010 (due to new grading formula) the number of high schools to receive an award and the amount of the award has not been released.

Do schools have to apply to receive the award?

No. A school's eligibility for an award is based exclusively on the school's meeting statutorily defined performance criteria.⁷

How much funding has been provided for the School Recognition Program?⁸



How may funds from the financial awards be used?

Financial awards may be used for the following:

- ❖ Nonrecurring bonuses for faculty and staff;
- ❖ Nonrecurring expenditures for educational equipment or materials; or
- ❖ Temporary personnel to assist in maintaining and improving student performance.⁹

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ The amount per FTE is set annually in the General Appropriations Act pursuant to s. 1008.36(4), F.S.; the total annual award amounts can be accessed in the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) Third Calculation for each fiscal year at <http://www.fldoe.org/fefp/offrfefp.asp>.

⁹ Section 1008.36(5), F.S.

Who decides how the award is spent?

The school's staff and school advisory council jointly determine how the financial award is spent among the authorized purposes.¹⁰ If a school's staff and school advisory council do not reach a joint decision by February 1, the award is equally distributed to all classroom teachers currently teaching in the school. If a school selected to receive a school recognition award is no longer in existence at the time the award is paid, the district school superintendent must distribute the funds to teachers who taught at the school in the previous year in the form of a bonus.¹¹

May former faculty and staff employed at the school during the year the award was earned receive a bonus?

Yes. If the school's staff and school advisory council jointly approve bonuses before February 1, the school may pay the bonuses to faculty and staff employed during the school year for which the award was earned, even if a faculty or staff member is no longer employed by the school.¹²

Are the financial awards subject to collective bargaining?

No. Current law specifies that "[n]otwithstanding statutory provisions to the contrary, incentive awards are not subject to collective bargaining."¹³

Where can I get additional information?

Florida Department of Education

Office of Evaluation and Reporting
(850) 245-0411
www.fldoe.org/evaluation/

Florida House of Representatives

Education Committee
(850) 488-7451
<http://www.myfloridahouse.gov>

¹⁰ Section 1008.36(4), F.S.

¹¹ Section 1008.36(4), F.S., as amended by s. 13, ch. 2010-22, L.O.F.

¹² *School Recognition FAQs*, supra note 1.

¹³ Section 1008.36(5), F.S.