

A+ School Recognition Funds

Guidelines for School Advisory Councils (SAC)

Florida Statutes § 1008.36 entitled Florida School Recognition Programs states:

(1) The Legislature finds that there is a need for a performance incentive program for outstanding faculty and staff in highly productive schools. The Legislature further finds that performance-based incentives are commonplace in the private sector and should be infused into the public sector as a reward for productivity.

(2) The Florida School Recognition Program is created to provide financial awards to public schools that:

- (a) Sustain high performance by receiving a school grade of "A," making excellent progress; or
- (b) Demonstrate exemplary improvement due to innovation and effort by improving a letter grade.

(3) All public schools including charter schools that receive a school grade pursuant to s. 1008.34 are eligible to participate in the program.

(4) All selected schools shall receive financial awards depending on the availability of funds appropriated and the number and size of schools selected to receive an award. Funds must be distributed to the school's fiscal agent and placed in the school's account and must be used for purposes listed in subsection (5) as determined jointly by the school's staff and school advisory council. If school staff and the school advisory council cannot reach agreement by the State department's deadline of February 1, the awards must be equally distributed to all classroom teachers currently teaching in the school.

(5) School recognition awards must be used for the following:

- (a) Nonrecurring bonuses to the faculty and staff;**
- (b) Nonrecurring expenditures for educational equipment or materials to assist in maintaining and improving student performance; or**
- (c) Temporary personnel for the school to assist in maintaining and improving student performance.**

Notwithstanding statutory provisions to the contrary, incentive awards **are not** subject to collective bargaining.

Suggested tips for creating an A+ School Recognition Plan:

- Proposals need to clearly address who the funding goes to. For example: ONLY to employees from the previous school year or to ALL current employees.
- Specify who and what positions among the temporary personnel will be part of the plan.
- Supplies and equipment should be designated in the spending plan, along with who makes the decision on the allocation of the funds for supplies and equipment. Note: Incentives, such as gift cards, are NOT classified as supplies or equipment.
- Be sure the amount of funding in the plan is equal to the total amount earned by the school. Schools should use the bonus calculator provided on the Budget Department webpage: <http://www.palmbeachschools.org/budget/ResourcesandTools.asp>. Miscalculations of bonus costs often cause overspending. Be sure the total charge to the budget column does not exceed the amount approved for bonuses.

Although legislation does not specify a decision-making process and schools can reach the joint decision between staff and SAC through various methods determined by the school, the following step-by-step procedures offer one example that may resolve potential conflicts with reaching the decision:

1. Set a date when proposals are due to the SAC.
2. School staff establishes an *A+ Committee*, **without SAC member representation**, to collect proposals. Anyone can submit a proposal to the committee.
3. *A+ Committee* produces a ballot with all of the submitted proposals and a "*None of the above*" choice.
4. **SAC members may add a proposal. SAC votes (50% +1) to approve the ballot.**
5. The ballot should be available for review by the staff for at least 3 working days prior to final vote. **Note, if more than two choices exist on the ballot, a**

primary vote could occur to target the top two options for the final ballot.

Always allow at least 3 working days prior to the final vote.

6. Personnel signs a sign-in sheet and votes by secret ballot for one proposal.
7. Ballots are counted. **Proposal with most votes wins.**
8. The winning proposal is presented to SAC. If "*None of the above*" wins, return to number 3.

SAMPLE DOCUMENTATION FOR SCHOOL SITE:

AUTHORIZATION TO DISTRIBUTE A+ SCHOOL RECOGNITION FUNDS

This document indicates:

1. All individuals involved were afforded the opportunity to submit a proposal.
2. The school advisory council (SAC) voted (50%+1) to approve a final ballot.
3. School faculty and staff members voted by secret ballot on how to spend A+ School Recognition Funds. Choice with most votes won.
4. Subsequent to the secret ballot vote, the SAC was or will be presented the results at an open meeting.
5. The uses of the funds conform to Statute governing such funds and final decisions were presented in an open meeting.

PRINCIPAL

DATE

SAC CHAIR

DATE