



Nancy S. Grasmick
State Superintendent of Schools

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To: Members of the State Board of Education

From: Nancy S. Grasmick *Nancy*

Date: September 24-25, 2002

Re: School Recognition Awards Criteria Revision

Purpose

To request approval of the State Board of Education of proposed revisions to the criteria to be used in FY 2003 for the distribution of financial awards for the School Recognition Program. These awards will recognize the performance of schools based on the 2000-2001 Maryland School Performance Report. Awards will be presented this fall.

Background

Under section 5-208(C)(2) of the Education Article, the State Board is required to establish guidelines for eligibility for and distribution of school recognition awards (Attachment 1). The criteria for identifying schools for the School Recognition Program were first implemented in 1996 to determine the distribution of \$2.75 million in state funds for improved school performance. The criteria were first revised in October 1998 to broaden the program to include additional schools. The criteria were again revised and approved by the State Board on July 27, 1999 to require schools with multiple racial subgroups to show improvement in those groups in order to be recognized.

Because of the formula used to determine eligibility, the School Recognition Program has in recent years recognized fewer schools, and the size of awards became increasingly disproportionate to the original legislative intent of the program. I asked Dr. Ronald Peiffer to convene a stakeholder workgroup to study the issue and make recommendations to me about possible improvements we could make to the program. They were asked to look for ways to distribute the funds more broadly among schools and school systems. They were also asked to look for ways to make the program more compatible with the federal expectations for school recognition programs as described in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Attachment 2).

The School Recognition Study Group included representation from local superintendents, Maryland State Teachers Association, Eastern Shore of Maryland Education Consortium, state elementary and secondary principals associations, Maryland Business Roundtable for Education, the Baltimore Teachers Union, and Maryland PTA as well as MSDE staff (Attachment 3).

Executive Summary

The proposed criteria simplify and streamline the School Recognition Program and address the six goals identified by the Study Group (See Proposal). The criteria are also compatible with the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

The proposal includes two awards:

The "School Improvement Award for Subgroup Progress" will recognize schools for raising the achievement levels of individual subgroups of students. Ninety percent of the \$2.75 million will be allocated for these awards.

These schools can also be rewarded for overall progress through the "School Improvement Award for Overall Progress." Schools that have made gains in overall performance as measured by the School Performance Index and show progress with all race/ethnicity subgroups will receive the "School Improvement Award for Overall Progress." Ten percent of the \$2.75 million will be allocated for these awards. (See Proposed Guidelines.)

The Study Group recognizes the need to continue to meet periodically to recommend further adjustments in the criteria as we move forward with the Maryland School Assessment and the High School Assessments.

Action

The State Board is asked to approve the revised guidelines by adopting the selection criteria for the awards program for 2000-2001. In future years, I will return to the State Board to suggest adjustments that may be necessary as we transition to full implementation of the NCLB requirements.

PROPOSAL

SCHOOL RECOGNITION PROGRAM

Purpose of Program

The Maryland School Recognition Program is designed to award schools for demonstrating improved student performance and raising the levels of student academic achievement.

Focus of Study Group

To continue the program's focus on student performance and academic achievement, the Study Group identified the following goals to guide their discussion:

- Align the School Recognition Program with the reporting requirements of No Child Left Behind legislation.
- Make the program more transparent and easier for school and community members to identify schools that qualify for recognition.
- Present the awards in more timely manner.
- Develop a program that is transitional, moving from the current method of identifying schools by using the overall school performance as measured with the MSPAP School Performance Index (SPI) to recognizing schools for performance in subject areas and in subgroups.
- Expand the program to recognize the achievement of more schools.
- Make the program compatible with the U.S. Department of Education's Blue Ribbon Schools Program.

The Study Group believes the recommended revisions in the criteria accomplish the goals identified by the State Superintendent and the Study Group. It is clear, however, that the program will need additional modifications in the future to incorporate the new Maryland School Assessment and the full implementation of the High School Assessments. The Study Group recognizes the need to meet periodically to recommend to the State Superintendent further adjustments in the criteria that may be needed in the future.

PROPOSED GUIDELINES

The Study Group believes that the above goals could be best met by redesigning the school recognition criteria to include the following:

I. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AWARD FOR SUBGROUP PROGRESS

The School Improvement Award for Subgroup Progress will be presented for improving reading and/or mathematics scores of subgroups of students in grades 3, 5, and 8.

- The subgroups will include the five race/ethnicity groups, special education, free and reduced price meals, and limited English proficiency. (Limited English proficiency data for grades 3, 5, and 8 not available for 2000-2001; free and reduced price meals data not available for grade 8.)
- To receive an award, a school must show at least a 5-point increase over the previous year in the score for the subgroup of students. Schools will receive an award for a 5-point increase over the previous year in each identified subgroup.
- 90% of \$2.75 million in state funds would be distributed to schools earning School Improvement Awards for Subgroup Progress.

The following matrices show the subgroups in which grades 3 and 5 could qualify for awards:

Grade 3 (MSPAP only)

	Ethnicity					Special Services*	
	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Asian	African American	White	Hispanic	Special Education	FARMS (Free and Reduced Price Meals)
Reading	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Math	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

* LEP data not available.

Grade 5 (MSPAP only)

	Ethnicity					Special Services*	
	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Asian	African American	White	Hispanic	Special Education	FARMS (Free and Reduced Price Meals)
Reading	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Math	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

* LEP data not available.

Example: Elementary School Award
(X represents a 5-point increase)

	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Asian	African American	White	Hispanic	Special Education	FARMS (Free and Reduced Price Meals)
Grade 3 Reading		X	X	X		X	
Grade 3 Math			X		X		
Grade 5 Reading		X	X	X	X		
Grade 5 Math		X	X				X

Based on the above illustration, the elementary school has earned 13 awards based on a 5-point increase in the following:

Grade 3 Reading:

Asian, African American, White and Special Education

Grade 3 Math:

African American and Hispanic

Grade 5 Reading:

Asian, African American, White, and Hispanic

Grade 5 Math:

Asian and African American and FARMS (Free and Reduced Price Meals)

The following matrix illustrates the subgroups in which grade 8 would qualify for an award(s):

Grade 8 (MSPAP and MFT)

	Ethnicity					Special Services*
	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Asian	African American	White	Hispanic	Special Education
Reading/ MSPAP	X	X	X	X	X	X
Math/ MSPAP	X	X	X	X	X	X
Reading/ MFT	X	X	X	X	X	X
Math/ MFT	X	X	X	X	X	X

* FARMS & LEP data not available.

Example: Middle School Award

(X represents a 5-point increase)

	American Indian/ Alaskan Native	Asian	African American	White	Hispanic	Special Education
Grade 8 Reading/ MSPAP			X	X	X	X
Grade 8 Math/ MSPAP			X	X		
Grade 9* Reading/ MFT		X	X	X		X
Grade 9* Math/ MFT		X	X			

*Percent of students passing the test by end of grade 9 who previously attended the middle school

Based on the above illustration, the middle school has earned 12 awards based on a 5-point increase in the following:

Grade 8 Reading/MSPAP:

African American, White, Hispanic, and Special Education

Grade 8 Math/MSPAP:

African American and White

Grade 9 Reading/MFT:

Asian, African American, White, and Special Education

Grade 9 Math/MFT:

Asian and African American

II. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AWARDS FOR OVERALL PROGRESS

School Improvement Awards for Overall Progress will be presented to schools that also meet the School Performance Index (SPI) improvement measures used in the past.

- 10% of \$2.75 million in state funds will be distributed equally to schools earning School Improvement Awards for Overall Progress.
- Schools showing overall gains in SPI will receive an additional financial award over and above the amount they earn for School Improvement Awards for Subgroup Progress.

Guidelines for Homogenous Schools

- Two years of significant improvement;
- Significant improvement of the current year over the prior year and consistent improvement over 4 years; or
- On average, meeting the State satisfactory standards (School Improvement Index equal to or greater than 100 for the current year) and consistent improvement over 4 year

Guidelines for Heterogeneous Schools

- Overall school improvement must meet the above guidelines and
- The minority population(s) in the school must demonstrate 4 years of consistent improvement.

ATTACHMENT 3

SCHOOL RECOGNITION STUDY GROUP

MEMBERS

Jon Andes	PSSAM
Clara Floyd	MSTA
R. Allan Gorsuch	Eastern Shore of Maryland Education Consortium
Steve Grudis	Parkside High School, Principal
Peggy Kirk	Emmerton Elementary School, Principal
Mary Myers	Baltimore Teachers Union
Ester Parker	PTA
F. Wayne Towers	MBRT
Ronald Peiffer	Chairman, MSDE

MSDE RESOURCE TO THE STUDY GROUP

Tina Bjarekull
Valerie Cloutier
Renee Spence
Mark Moody
Maureen Moran
Sandra Shepherd
Darla Strouse
Sandra Toomey



Nancy S. Grasmick
State Superintendent of Schools

200 West Baltimore Street • Baltimore, MD 21201 • 410-767-0100 • 410-333-6442 TTY/TDD

TO: Local School Superintendents
FROM: Nancy S. Grasmick, State Superintendent of Schools *Y*
DATE: November 1, 2002
RE: Maryland School Performance Recognition Program

The State Board of Education recently approved revisions to the criteria to be used this year for distributing financial awards for the School Performance Recognition Program. These awards recognize the performance of schools based on the 2000-2001 Maryland School Performance Report and were recommended by a study group representing educators, parents, and business people. I shared information about the proposed changes with you at a recent superintendents' meeting. The revisions will start a transition period during which we will work to incorporate the Maryland School Assessment, the High School Assessments, and place a stronger focus on disaggregated data as required by the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

Enclosed in this packet you will find:

- A list of schools in your system that have earned financial rewards. Schools are receiving awards for showing at least a five-point increase in scores in reading and/or mathematics in grades 3, 5, and 8 among subgroups of students. Schools were eligible for an award for each subgroup of students that showed the increase. These same schools will receive an additional award if they met the School Performance Index (SPI) criteria used in previous years.
- A FACT SHEET that provides background information about the program and the criteria for the awards. This information can be useful in developing a local news release to announce your school system's achievement. We will be happy to assist you in developing your local news release if you would like. Please plan to notify your schools and your local news media between November 1 and November 30. We expect to make a state announcement about the awards shortly after December 1.

In lieu of certificates and plaques, I will be sending a letter of commendation to each school after December 1.

Next week, we will be sending you a short form to be completed for each school that is receiving an award, and we will give you details of each school's achievement(s). You will need to submit a brief plan on this form completed by each school explaining how they will use the funds. Streamlined instructions will be included. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ron Peiffer at 410-767-047.

DATES TO REMEMBER

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|---------------|---|
| November 1 | Superintendents will receive information packets and list of schools to receive awards. |
| November 4-8 | Superintendents will receive submission forms and instructions along with details of each school's achievement(s). |
| November 1-30 | Superintendents may notify schools and local news media about local awards. |
| December 1 | MSDE will distribute news release to media about state awards; State Superintendent will begin sending letters of commendations to schools. |
| January 10 | Deadline for local school systems to submit forms and budgets. |