



200 W. Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
Nancy S. Grasmick
State Superintendent of Schools

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE RECOGNITION PROGRAM

Fact Sheet
20c

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What is the School Performance Recognition Program?

The School Performance Recognition Program recognizes elementary, middle and high schools for achievement and subgroup improvement based on the Maryland School Assessment. Maryland Blue Ribbon Schools and National Title I Distinguished Schools are also recognized. Title I funds help support the rewards for economically disadvantaged schools that meet Title I eligibility requirements.

The program provides an incentive for schools to continue to make academic improvement and gives public recognition for the work of teachers, principals, parents, and community members in bringing about positive change in student learning. The recognition of improving schools complements the restructuring of schools that are failing to progress.

How are schools selected?

Each year the state releases information on how well schools have done in meeting standards of performance established by the federal No Child Left Behind Act. The standards represent high but reasonable levels of school performance measured in terms of student learning and participation in school. Schools are selected for recognition based on their achievement and their demonstrated improvement in progressing toward the standards. The criteria include the performance of minority groups and special populations, including special education students, limited English proficient students and economically disadvantaged students.

Do all schools have a chance to be recognized?

All schools with an enrollment of students in grade 3 or above have a chance to be recognized. Low performing schools that demonstrate significant improvement have the same chance to earn an award as do high performing schools.

What kind of awards do schools receive?

The federal Title I program provides funds for each Title I school being recognized. The amount of each school's award depends on the number of schools qualifying for the awards and the amount of federal funds available for that year. Other schools may receive certificates of recognition.

What awards are presented?

- **School Improvement Award for Achievement**
 - **School Improvement Award for Improvement Among Subgroups**
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How many schools earn an award?

About one-third of the schools across the state receive recognition in the program. The schools receiving awards represent approximately the top 25% of high academic achieving schools in the state and approximately the top 25% of schools that show academic improvement among subgroups. Some schools are recognized for both high academic achievement and for showing improvement among the subgroups of students in the school.

How will schools use the School Performance Awards?

The school improvement team in each school that receives a financial award determines the use of the funds. Many schools use the funds for instructional materials, computers or other technology, staff development, improvement planning, increasing parent involvement, and similar purposes related to continuing the progress in student learning. The funds may not be used to give bonuses or extra pay to staff or to supplant or replace other federal, state, or local funds available to the school. In their use of the awards, schools must follow local school system policies and procedures.