# SIP Bites – Florida School Recognition Program (A+ Funds)

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**November 13, 2025 ~ Volume 5, Issue 13**

## Due by February 1, 2026

The Florida Department of Education has provided a list of qualifying schools for the Florida School Recognition Program to the district. To meet the state law deadline and be afforded an opportunity to implement options for the allocations of the funds, the voting process provided is to be successfully completed by February 1 for all schools that qualify for the Florida School Recognition Program.

Florida Statute 1008.36 states that, “If the school’s staff and the School Advisory Council cannot reach agreement by February 1, the awards must be equally distributed to all classroom teachers currently teaching in the school.” For clarification purposes, a classroom teacher is one who is assigned to a classroom with students on a daily basis.

### Use of the School Recognition Awards (A+ Funds)

- Schools must use their awards for one or any combination of the following, as stated in Florida Statute 1008.36:
  - Nonrecurring bonuses to faculty and staff;
  - Nonrecurring expenditures for educational equipment or materials to assist in maintaining and improving student performance; or
  - Temporary personnel for the school to assist in maintaining and improving student performance.

### Additional Information:

- Each school’s total award is reduced for fringe benefits on bonus payments.
- Bonuses are not subject to collective bargaining.

### Resources (Available on the School Improvement Website):

- SIP Bites – Florida School Recognition Program (A+ Funds)
- Florida School Recognition Program (A+ Funds) Checklist
- Ballot Count Summary Sheet

# Florida School Recognition Program (A+ Funds) Quick Reference Guide

1. The School Advisory Council (SAC) creates a ballot with written proposals aligned to the approved use of the school recognition awards in Florida Statute 1008.36.
   - The ballot must list all proposals for dispensing the A+ Funds, including 'None of the above.'
   - When creating award distribution proposals through SAC, use percentages (preferred) or exact amounts.
     - **For example:** 80% of the recognition award will be shared equally among staff from the previous 2024-2025 school year and 20% goes back to the school for nonrecurring expenditures for educational equipment or materials for 125 Lenovo student laptops.

2. Creating the proposals and ballot for the staff vote.
   - The ballot must include 'None of the Above' as a proposal.
   - The ballot must include a statement to specify the use of any leftover funds. Those funds must be allocated to non-recurring expenditures for educational equipment and materials to assist in maintaining and improving student performance during this school year.
   - SAC must vote by roll call to approve the proposals for the ballot. A quorum (50% plus 1 of the total required members) must be present for voting to take place. The process must be recorded in the minutes.

3. The staff vote must be advertised.
   - Eligible staff will vote by secret ballot.
   - The official ballot must be presented/advertised in written form to the staff a minimum of three (3) business/work days before the vote.
   - The written advertisement must include the date, time and location of the vote.
   - Absent employees who return to work no later than one (1) work day after the vote may vote.

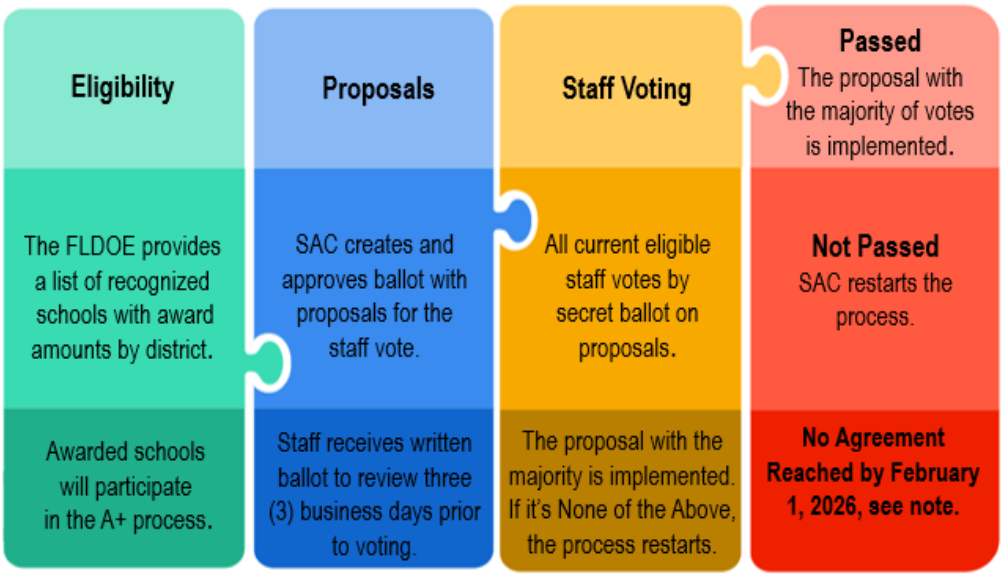
4. If no proposal or 'None of the Above' gets the majority vote, SAC must repeat the process starting with number one above.

5. Administrators and the SAC Chair/Co-Chairs must use the **Florida School Recognition Program (A+ Funds) Checklist** to review all required A+ documentation prior to submission.

6. Upon completion of the A+ process, the principal must review and email the school's completed Florida School Recognition Program packet to the School Improvement Instructional Facilitator **as one PDF document in the following order** (refer to the A+ Funds Checklist for details):
   - **SAC Meeting** - Advertisements, agenda, minutes and sign-in sheets (members and guests)
   - **Staff Vote** – Written advertisement, official ballot, 2025-2026 staff roster sign-in sheets and the Florida School Recognition Program (A+ Funds) Ballot Count Summary Sheet.

# Florida School Recognition Program (A+ Funds)

## ~ Process Flowchart ~




**Note:** Florida Statute 1008.36 states that, "If school staff and the School Advisory Council cannot reach agreement by February 1, the awards must be equally distributed to all classroom teachers currently teaching in the school."

## ~ A+ Funds Checklist and Required Documentation ~

### Florida School Recognition Program (A+ Funds) Checklist

**Kelli S. Blackburn, School Improvement Coordinator**

**Instructions:** To complete the A+ Funds process, use this checklist along with the **SIP Bites – Florida School Recognition Program (A+ Funds)** and other listed resources for detailed instructions. Upon completion of the A+ process, the principal must review and email the school's completed Florida School Recognition Program packet to the School Improvement Instructional Facilitator **as one PDF document in the order presented in the checklist below.**

Additional resources:
- **2025-2026 Florida School Recognition Awards Process Timeline**
- **Florida School Recognition Awards (A+ Funds) Ballot Count Summary Sheet**

Florida Statute 1008.36 states that, "If school staff and the School Advisory Council cannot reach agreement by February 1, the awards must be equally distributed to all classroom teachers currently teaching in the school." For clarification purposes, a classroom teacher is one who is assigned to a classroom with students on a daily basis.

| Actions (Must happen in the order presented) | Required Documents — Upon completion of the A+ process, the principal must review and email the school's completed Florida School Recognition Program packet to the School Improvement Instructional Facilitator **as one PDF document in the order presented in the checklist below.** | 1st Meeting | 2nd Meeting (if applicable) | 3rd Meeting (if applicable) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **School Advisory Council (SAC) Meeting** | | **Date:** | **Date:** | **Date:** |
| SAC meets during a scheduled meeting to discuss and create a ballot with written proposals aligned to the approved use of the school recognition awards in Florida Statute 1008.36.<br>1. Advertise SAC meeting with the agenda to all stakeholders **at least three (3) full business/work days prior** to the meeting. Include the agenda.<br>a. Voting will take place. Ensure a quorum is present (50% plus 1 of the total number of required SAC members).<br>2. Agenda must include **"Florida School Recognition Program (A+ Funds) Proposals"** as a topic.<br>3. SAC discusses the proposals and conducts a vote (SAC members only) to approve a written ballot which consists of one (1) or two (2) proposals and **"None of the Above"** for the allocation of the funds.<br>a. Leftover funds must be addressed on the ballot.<br>4. Record the A+ Funds discussion and results of the SAC vote in the minutes.<br>5. SAC should discuss the timeline for the upcoming staff vote. | **Email at least two (2) SAC Meeting Advertisements** (Sent to all stakeholders - staff, parents, community, etc., and includes the agenda, date, time and location of the meeting)<br>• Advertisements must show they were sent/posted at least three (3) full business/work days prior to the meeting (flyer, school website, newsletter, email, Parent Link, etc.) and the recipients (all stakeholders).<br>**Email SAC Meeting Agenda**<br>• Florida School Recognition Program (A+ Funds) Proposals" is shown as a topic.<br>**Email SAC Meeting Minutes**<br>• Must reflect A+ Funds discussion, proposals, left over funds, SAC vote for approved ballot proposals and the outcome of the vote, ballot creation for staff vote and discussion of the timeline for the upcoming staff vote.<br>**Email SAC Meeting Sign-In Sheets**<br>• For SAC members and guests | | | |
| **General Staff Vote** | | **1st Vote Date:** | **2nd Vote (if applicable) Date:** | **3rd Vote (if applicable) Date:** |
| Staff votes by secret ballot on A+ Fund proposals.<br>1. Advertise general vote along with the official A+ Funds ballot in written form to all eligible staff members **at least three (3) full business/work days prior** to voting. | **Email Written Advertisement to Staff** (email, posted notice, etc.)<br>• Evidence must include purpose of vote (e.g., voting on Florida School Recognition Program (A+ Funds) distribution, copy of the SAC approved 2025-2026 Florida School | | | |

