

RECOMMENDED SCHOOL RECOGNITION PROCESS

In order to respond to requests from schools, and to help provide some consistency, the following process has been jointly developed by VTO, VESA, and AFSCME and the District to assist you:

I. Background Information

- A. Florida Statute 1008.36 clearly intended that such money would be “infused into the public sector as a reward for productivity”. It further declared that “the school’s staff and the school advisory council (SAC) jointly make” the decision regarding distribution of such dollars.
- B. The most recent version of the law indicated that if the Staff and SAC cannot reach agreement by February 1, the money shall be distributed evenly among “classroom teachers currently employed at the school”.
- C. The law permits the money to be used for only four purposes, and lists them in this order:
 - 1. Nonrecurring bonuses for staff and faculty
 - 2. Nonrecurring expenditures for education equipment
 - 3. Nonrecurring expenditures for materials and supplies
 - 4. Temporary personnel
- D. Had this money not been set aside for the School Recognition Program, it would be otherwise available to districts in pro rata share, and subject to bargaining.
- E. While the law excludes the distribution of such funds from collective bargaining, there is no prohibition against establishing a district policy for a uniform and fair process to be used in determining that distribution.

II. Jointly Developed Process

- A. Form a Staff Committee of elected representatives from all constituent groups of the staff. The Committee should be proportionately representative of the employees in each group and elected only by the members of each group. Logical groups include: Administrators, Instructional Personnel, and the various support staff groups. **The Staff Committee shall elect a chairperson.**
- B. Have the Staff Committee develop options, make recommendations, and conduct a secret ballot staff vote on those issues regarding “who” should share in any bonus distribution if a bonus is an option.
 - 1. Which of the listed groups should share in the distribution?

2. Would distribution be restricted to those who were at the school during the year earned, those who are at the school now, or only those who meet both criteria?
 3. Past employees of the school from the prior school year, including retirees, may receive the school recognition bonus. FRS confirms that these bonuses are not deemed compensation for FRS purposes and do not affect retirement benefits.
 4. However, only school employees currently on staff at the school may vote on distribution of those bonuses.
- C. The Staff Committee should develop options, make recommendations, and conduct a secret ballot staff vote on those issues regarding the percentage split between bonuses and other permitted uses of the funds. (Examples: 60%/40%, 80%/20%, 90%/10%, etc.)
- D. If the percentage split includes bonuses, the Staff Committee should develop options, make recommendations, and conduct a secret ballot vote on the distribution of the bonuses.
- E. Finally, the Staff Committee shall solicit input on the distribution of the remaining funds and develop recommendations for a staff vote.
- F. Once the plan has been developed, the Staff Committee should prepare a report, outlining the procedures used, listing the exact dollar amounts allocated, and reflecting the staff vote on these issues. This report should be sent as a recommendation to the SAC. The SAC may accept, reject, or propose a revised plan.

Funds are placed in the School's budget at the district level and spent in accordance with the district's purchasing policies. It is recommended that funds be spent in the year awarded, but remaining funds are eligible for carryover. No interest will be earned on unencumbered balances.

In the event that a school chooses to deviate from this process, than a copy of that process shall be provided to all employees and to the area superintendent.