



NJDOE News

Contact: Richard Vespucci
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Department of Education Announces [2000-01 Best Practices / Star Schools](#)

Local Interest

Leading educators from throughout New Jersey are preparing to convene for an annual celebration of model schools and home-grown classroom practices that have proven to be effective. Commissioner of Education Vito A. Gagliardi, Sr. will lead the educators in honoring exemplary schools and innovative practices on June 7 at the eighth annual awards ceremony of the Best Practices / Star Schools Program.

Ten Star Schools and 50 Best Practices will be singled out for their accomplishments in the special recognition ceremony, scheduled to begin at 1:30 p.m. at the Greystone Manor, Freehold. Commissioner Gagliardi will be joined by Ellen Schechter, assistant commissioner for the Division of Academic and Career Standards, and Anne Dillman, member of the State Board of Education, in presenting pins, banners and certificates to the educators. Each Star School will be awarded \$1,000; each Best Practice will receive \$500. Approximately 300 educators are expected to attend.

"New Jersey is home to many excellent academic programs and schools that are second to none in their success," said Dr. Gagliardi. "Through our Best Practices / Star Schools Program, we hold them up as examples of achievement worthy of our praise and respect."

"I am especially pleased that one of our Star Schools this year - Rosa L. Parks School of Fine and Performing Arts, is located in Paterson, which is a state-operated school district and one of the 30 Abbott school districts," Gagliardi continued. "This particular selection affirms my belief that if we work hard enough and smart enough, we can bring about successful schools anywhere."

"Best Practices / Star Schools is a program that continues to grow in stature with each passing year," said Maud Dahme, president of the State Board of Education. "School districts that have achieved such distinctions are unabashedly proud of their accomplishments. I applaud this year's winners and wish them continued success in the years to come."

The Department of Education received nearly 800 applications for the 2000-01 Best Practices / Star Schools competition. Each school or practice was subjected to a rigorous review.

In the first phase, the county offices of education reviewed each application for compliance with laws, regulations and department policy. Then, the applications were submitted to the Department of Education, where panels of experts (involving approximately 300 administrators and teachers) reviewed the work of their peers and rated each application. A second peer review of the highest-scoring applications was then conducted. In the final phases, the focus of the evaluation returned to the county and local levels. The process culminated in 60 site visits by panel members to verify information in the applications.

The Star Schools component of the program identifies New Jersey schools that have a particular specialization or whole school reform model with objectives that help students meet the state's academic and cross content workplace readiness standards. In addition, the school's faculty is involved in professional development activities that contribute to exemplary teaching practices. Active involvement of parents, business and the community is a hallmark of Star Schools.

The Best Practices component is designed to recognize successful practices in 19 different categories that address the educational needs of students and help them achieve New Jersey's Core Curriculum Content Standards, including the cross content workplace readiness standards.

The Best Practices / Star Schools Program is administered by the Office of Innovative Programs and Practices in the Division of Academic and Career Standards, New Jersey Department of Education. Schools and practices identified through the program become part of the Office of Innovative Programs and Practices website, which was established to provide information regarding innovative and effective program models.

In addition to the database provided through the website, the department publishes a report that summarizes

information about the winning Star Schools and Best Practices. Information about the Best Practices / Star Schools Program can be found on the Department of Education's website:

www.state.nj.us/education

([click Innovative Programs and Practices](#))

NOTE: attached are the names of the winners of the 2000-01 Best Practices / Star Schools Program.