

## **Academic Achievement Programs**

In order to reward successful schools and school districts for significant progress in improving student achievement, the Georgia Department of Education honors K-12 Title I schools that make adequate yearly progress for three or more consecutive years and school districts that make significant progress in closing the achievement gap.

The Title I Distinguished Schools program recognizes and honors schools that meet or exceed adequate yearly progress (AYP) for three or more consecutive years and have not been on the Unsafe Schools Choice Option (USCO) list within the last two years. Schools making AYP for three consecutive years receive a certificate of recognition. Schools making AYP for four or more consecutive years receive a certificate of recognition, a monetary award. Schools may use their funds to provide teachers and staff bonuses and/or to purchase instructionally related supplies and services for the school.

Funding for the Title I Distinguished Schools program is provided by the No Child Left Behind Act Title I program. NCLB allows state education agencies to earmark funds from its total allocation to reward schools for academic success. Seventy-five percent of the funds must be distributed to those schools with the highest percentage of poverty.

The Title I Distinguished Districts program recognizes and honors local school districts that have made the greatest gains in the percent of Economically Disadvantaged students meeting or exceeding state standards on assessments administered in the previous school year compared to assessments administered in the current school year. Four school districts receive the award:

- One school district with a student population over 10,000
- One school district with a student population of 4,000 – 9,999
- One school district with a student population of 2,000 – 3,999
- One school district with a student population under 2,000

Honored school districts receive a certificate of recognition, a \$50,000 monetary award.

The Georgia Department of Education elects to earmark \$200,000 (\$50,000 per local school district) per year of its administrative funds to reward four local school districts for academic success. Districts may use their funds to provide district staff, teachers and school-level staff bonuses and/or to purchase instructionally related supplies and services for the district.

The National Title I Distinguished Schools Program annually recognizes two schools from each state. One school is selected from each of the following categories: (1) A school that has exceeded its adequate yearly progress for two or more years NCLB, Section 117(b)(1)(B)(ii) and (2) A school that has significantly closed the achievement gap between student groups NCLB, Section 117(b)(1)(B)(i). Each selected school must have a poverty rate of at least 35% for the selected year, demonstrate high academic achievement for two or more consecutive years, and met or exceeded state standards for making adequate yearly progress (AYP) for two or more consecutive years.