



## NJDOE News

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### **DOE Celebrates [2002-2003 Best Practices/Star Schools](#)**

The Department of Education today honored the 2002-2003 Best Practices/Star Schools at a recognition ceremony at The Greystone Manor in Freehold. The Best Practices/Star Schools program highlights outstanding classroom practices and model schools of excellence throughout New Jersey.

"This year's award recipients are among the very best our state has to offer," Commissioner of Education William L. Librera said. "These schools are excellent examples of what it takes to develop and maintain strong programs that address our students' needs. Such programs and schools prepare our students for successful lives once they succeed in the K-12 system and move on to future endeavors."

"New Jersey has many excellent schools and locally developed classroom practices that promote high levels of student achievement," Dr. Librera continued. "This year's Star Schools and Best Practices will be added to our growing list of successful schools and programs. All involved should feel a great deal of pride for their efforts and their impact on our children. They are to be commended."

Today's ceremony honored eight Star Schools and 50 Best Practices selected from a field of more than 800 applications. Star Schools selected span the state. For example, the Walter J. Kossmann Elementary School in Morris County was named, as was the Eagle Academy in Atlantic County.

The Best Practices programs selected covered a range of activities, from health and physical education programs to diversity/equity programs to the Arts and Visual Performing.

Applications for Best Practices / Star Schools are first reviewed by the county offices of education for compliance with laws, regulations and department policy. Then, the applications are submitted to the Department of Education, where panels of experts (involving approximately 300 administrators and teachers) review the work of their peers and rate each application.

A second peer review of the highest-scoring applications is then conducted. In the final phases, the focus of the evaluation returns to the county and local levels. The process culminates 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 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 20 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 Schools, Division of Educational Programs and Assessment. Schools and practices identified through the program become part of the Office of Innovative Programs and Schools Web site, which was established to provide information regarding innovative and effective program models.

For more information about the Best Practices / Star Schools, please contact the Department of Education Public Information Office at (609) 292-1126.