



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025

### *ECTAC Exceeding Expectations Schools Named for 2025*

In 2012, ECTAC launched the Exceeding Expectations Project, an undertaking that identifies high-poverty schools demonstrating exceptional progress in enhancing student achievement for all students.

ECTAC utilized 2024 School Grade Data to identify eligible Award Schools. Out of 3,457 schools with School Grade data, only 43 schools met the initial criteria established by ECTAC and the Exceeding Expectations volunteer Criteria Development Committee.

The [Award School criteria](#) encompassed various factors such as:

- Achievement,
- Learning Gains,
- Achievement in ESSA Student Groups/Subgroups\*,
- The percentage of Economically Disadvantaged Students.

Criteria were distinguished by school type, including Elementary, Middle, High, and Combination schools.

In addition to the quantitative data, eligible schools submitted a School Success Story Presentation Application for further consideration as an Award School. This additional information served to validate the data and provide a comprehensive understanding of each school's accomplishments.

Based on the 2024 School Grade data and the additional information gathered, ECTAC is pleased to announce the following Award Schools:

Calusa Park Elementary School (Collier)  
Cypress Trails Elementary School (Palm Beach)  
Dr. Carlos J. Finlay Elementary (Miami-Dade)  
Heron Creek Middle School (Sarasota)  
Joe Hall Elementary School (Miami-Dade)  
Miami Gardens Elementary School (Miami-Dade)  
Morningside K-8 Academy (Miami-Dade)  
Orange Park High School (Clay)  
Plumosa School of the Arts (Palm Beach)  
Renaissance Charter at West Palm Beach (Palm Beach)  
Rock Lake Elementary (Orange)  
Sherwood Elementary School (Brevard)  
South Sumter Middle School (Sumter)  
Tropical Elementary School (Miami-Dade)  
Winston Park K-8 Center (Miami-Dade)

For the first time, ECTAC will also recognize “Rising Stars” ~ schools above the 2024 State Poverty Average of 71.6% that increased two letter grades from 2023 to 2024:

Arch Creek Elementary School (Miami-Dade)  
Bellview Elementary School (Escambia)  
Callaway Elementary School (Bay)  
Earlington Heights Elementary School (Miami-Dade)

Global Learning Academy (Escambia)  
Global Outreach Charter Academy High School (Duval)  
James A. Webster Elementary School (St. Johns)  
L. D. McArthur Elementary School (Escambia)  
Lake Placid Elementary School (Highlands)  
Laurel Elementary School (Polk)  
Oscar J. Pope Elementary School (Polk)  
Pineview Elementary School (Leon)  
Reinhardt Holm Elementary School (Escambia)  
Spring Lake Elementary School (Seminole)  
Warrington Elementary School (Escambia)  
West Tampa Elementary School (Hillsborough)  
Wildwood Elementary School (Sumter)

ECTAC Director, Maria Longa reflects: *"While the data brought these schools to our attention, their remarkable stories put them on this awards list. Join me in connecting in person with exceptional school leaders from across the state of Florida and learning from their journeys of success."*

The Exceeding Expectations Conference, scheduled from Wednesday, June 18 to Friday, June 20, 2025, at the Renaissance Orlando at Sea World, offers a unique venue for Award Schools, Rising Stars, and conference attendees to learn from and celebrate Florida schools who have attained remarkable academic achievement for their students. The professional learning event includes general sessions featuring keynote speakers Principal [Hamish Brewer](#), [George Couros](#), and [Dr. Joe Sanfelippo](#), concurrent sessions with Award School Presentations and Rising Star Panels, networking opportunities, and a recognition luncheon. All Florida districts and public schools are invited to attend the Exceeding Expectations Conference to foster collaborative learning and knowledge-sharing among peers.

Prior Exceeding Expectations attendees shared:

- This conference was top notch!! I enjoyed EVERY minute of it!!
- I feel focused and motivated for the year.
- The presenters were outstanding and the information extremely valuable. It is my first time attending, but I hope to attend again.
- I think this is a great way to network and share ideas with other educators across the state.

Over 400 conference attendees are expected this year.

For additional information and media inquiries, please contact:

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<https://www.ectacfl.net/exceeding-expectations-2025.html>

The East Coast Technical Assistance Center (ECTAC) is dedicated to providing professional learning, technical assistance, and networking opportunities to support the development and implementation of Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) programs, including Title I, Part A, across fifty-five member school districts in the state of Florida. Seminole County Public Schools serves as the fiscal agent for ECTAC.

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