



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards announced

Aiken County Public Schools earned several Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards for academic achievement and closing the achievement gap. This awards program was created by the South Carolina General Assembly to recognize schools that attained high levels of absolute performance, high rates of growth and substantial progress in closing achievement gaps between groups of students.

We are proud to announce the recognition of 14 schools earning 21 awards. Schools honored for general performance receive a certificate and award flag, while those recognized for closing achievement gaps receive a certificate. We will recognize each school during an upcoming board meeting.

GENERAL PERFORMANCE AWARDS

School Name	District Name	Award Type	Ratings 2010		Growth Index		Poverty Index
			Absolute	Growth	2010	2009	
North Augusta Middle	Aiken	Silver	G	G	96.8	97.1	49.9
Aiken Elementary	Aiken	Gold	E	E	98.0	97.7	63.1
M. B. Kennedy Middle	Aiken	Silver	G	G	97.1	95.1	48.0
Belvedere Elementary	Aiken	Silver	A	G	96.8	98.0	67.0
J. D. Lever Elementary	Aiken	Gold	A	E	97.7	93.9	85.7
Clearwater Elementary	Aiken	Silver	A	G	96.3	96.2	85.7
Gloverville Elementary	Aiken	Silver	A	G	94.9	97.7	82.9
Greendale Elementary	Aiken	Silver	A	G	95.7	96.3	87.4
Hammond Hill Elementary	Aiken	Gold	E	E	97.9	98.9	57.6
Millbrook Elementary	Aiken	Gold	G	E	96.9	95.0	68.9
North Augusta Elementary	Aiken	Gold	G	E	98.5	96.8	65.5
Cyril B. Busbee Elementary	Aiken	Silver	A	G	97.8	98.3	86.3
Oakwood-Windsor Elementary	Aiken	Silver	A	G	93.0	93.3	90.0
Chukker Creek Elementary	Aiken	Gold	E	E	97.1	96.9	43.3

The state’s Education Oversight Committee establishes criteria for the awards, and the Department of Education applies those criteria to determine which schools are honored. Schools receive general awards for overall performance based on both their absolute and growth ratings and the growth index found on school report cards. These ratings are determined by PASS scores for elementary and middle schools. Awards for high schools will be announced at a later date.

**SCHOOLS WITH TARGET DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP(S) RECOGNIZED
FOR CLOSING THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP IN 2010 FOR EXCELLENT
END-OF-YEAR PASS PERFORMANCE AND/OR FOR GROWTH IN
ACHIEVEMENT**

School Name	District	Award Type	Percent Poverty
Aiken Elementary	Aiken	Silver	63.1
M. B. Kennedy Middle	Aiken	Silver	48.0
J. D. Lever Elementary	Aiken	Silver	85.7
Clearwater Elementary	Aiken	Silver	85.7
Hammond Hill Elementary	Aiken	Silver	57.6
North Augusta Elementary	Aiken	Silver	65.5
Cyril B Busbee Elementary	Aiken	Silver	86.3

Closing the Achievement Gap

Schools received closing the achievement gap awards based on academic gains made by students who fall into four subgroups -- African American students, Hispanic students, students participating in federal free- or reduced-price lunch programs and students with non-speech disabilities.

If the performance of at least one of the subgroups is at or above the performance of white and pay lunch students statewide, the school earns end-of-year absolute performance closing the achievement gap honors. A school receives recognition for growth in achievement if at least one subgroup meets the growth in achievement criterion.

For more information on Aiken County results, please contact Dr. Kevin O’Gorman, Associate Superintendent of Instruction at 803.641.2637 or kogorman@aiken.k12.sc.us. For information on results around the state, please contact the South Carolina Department of Education at 803.734. 8374 or www.ed.sc.gov.