

Media Contact:  
John Ceballos  
(813) 974-8606  
[jceballos@floridacollegeaccess.org](mailto:jceballos@floridacollegeaccess.org)

PRESS RELEASE  
Florida College Access Network  
4202 E. Fowler Avenue, ALN 190  
Tampa, FL 33620



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **Florida CAN Announces 2017 FAFSA Challenge Winners**

*Increase in FAFSAs completed translates to \$37 million more in Pell grants for Florida students*

**Tampa, FL** — Florida College Access Network (Florida CAN) is thrilled to announce the winners of the [2017 Florida FAFSA Challenge](#), a statewide campaign to increase the proportion of high school seniors completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid!

Through March 31, 54 school districts and 390 high schools have increased the number of seniors who completed the federal financial aid form by at least 5% over last year, contributing to a statewide gain of 9.1%. This translates to over \$37 million more in Pell grant dollars alone for graduating seniors to help pay the cost of college. ([Click here](#) for a district-by-district breakdown of the estimated change in Pell grant dollars awarded.)

“The boost in Florida’s FAFSA completions this year is phenomenal and a credit to the schools, districts, and community partners who have worked passionately to ensure all of our students have the resources to attend college,” said Laurie Meggesin, Florida CAN’s executive director. “This is a real game-changer for the thousands of students and families impacted by this collective effort.”

Districts and schools in Miami-Dade, Orange, Broward, Sarasota, Gulf, and Okaloosa counties won top honors as the highest performers. Links to the Florida FAFSA Challenge Leaderboard and FAFSA completion data for all schools and districts — including all those that exceeded the 5% goal — are available on [Florida CAN’s blog](#). You can also [click here for a PDF version](#) of the trophy winners listed below.

**“MVP” (Have the highest FAFSA completion rate through March 31, 2017)**

*Large school: Coral Reef Senior High School, Miami, Miami-Dade County*

*Medium school: TERRA Environmental Research Institute, Miami, Miami-Dade County*

*Small school: Archimedean Upper Conservatory, Miami, Miami-Dade County*

*Large school district: Sarasota County*

*Small school district: Gulf County*

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**“Most Improved” (Improved FAFSA completion rate the most, compared to last year through March 31, 2017)**

*Large school: William R. Boone High School, Orlando, Orange County*

*Medium school: Mater Academy Charter High School, Hialeah Gardens, Miami-Dade County*

*Small school: Somerset Arts Conservatory, Pembroke Pines, Broward County*

*Large school district: Orange County*

*Small school district: Gulf County*

**“Biggest Boost” (Largest week-to-week change in percentage of students completing the FAFSA)**

*Large school: Riverview High School, Sarasota, Sarasota County*

*Medium school: TERRA Environmental Research Institute, Miami, Miami-Dade County*

*Small school: School for Advanced Studies – North, Miami, Miami-Dade County*

*Large school district: Okaloosa County*

*Small school district: Gulf County*

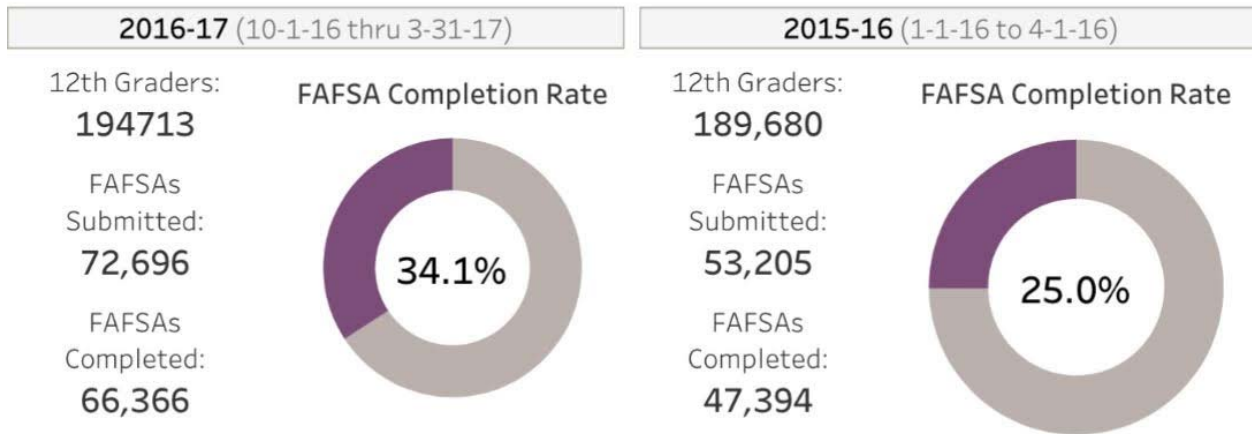
[Click here](#) for a full listing of the 54 districts and 390 schools that improved their FAFSA completion rate by 5% or more this spring.

**How did your school or district do?**

Curious about how your school or district fared in the Florida FAFSA Challenge? You can find out on Florida CAN’s FAFSA Finish Line dashboard, which includes data for over 600 public schools in the state.

The dashboard also allows users to view school, district, and state-level FAFSA completion rates using nine different filters and search options.

*Chart: FAFSA completion among 12<sup>th</sup> graders attending Florida public schools*



*Click image to view FAFSA completion rate data for all public schools in Florida*

The Florida FAFSA Challenge is part of [College Ready Florida](#), a suite of statewide initiatives designed to build a college-going culture and help all students — especially low-income students — continue their educations beyond high school.

Florida CAN applauds all schools and districts that committed to helping more graduating high school seniors access financial aid for college and congratulates those that boosted their FAFSA completion rates this year!

### **About Florida College Access Network**

The mission of the Florida College Access Network is to create and strengthen a statewide network that catalyzes and supports communities to improve college and career preparation, access, and completion for all students. Our Big Goal is to increase the percentage of Florida residents who hold a high-quality postsecondary degree or credential to 60% by the year 2025. For more information, visit [www.floridacollegeaccess.org](http://www.floridacollegeaccess.org).

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