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PRESS RELEASE  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **FCAN Announces 2018 Florida FAFSA Challenge Winners!**

*Florida seniors qualify for an estimated \$155 million in Pell Grant dollars to help pay for college*

Florida College Access Network (FCAN) is excited to announce the winners of the [2018 Florida FAFSA Challenge](#), a statewide campaign to increase the proportion of high school seniors completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Through the end of March, 124 schools representing 42 counties increased the percentage of seniors who completed the FAFSA by at least 5% over last year. Overall, Florida boosted the proportion of seniors completing the FAFSA by close to 1% over last year. As a result, Florida seniors qualify for [an estimated \\$155 million in Pell Grant dollars](#), an increase of about \$6 million from last year.

“Florida schools and districts have worked hard to ensure their seniors get the grants and scholarships they need to help pay college costs,” said Laurie Meggesin, FCAN’s executive director. “Their successes deserve celebration. We are grateful to everyone throughout the state who strives to ensure every student gets the support they need to afford college.”

Districts and schools in Miami-Dade, Broward, Sarasota, Gulf, Brevard, Polk, and Hardee counties won top honors as the highest performers. Links to the [Florida FAFSA Challenge Dashboard](#) and FAFSA completion data for all schools and districts — including [all those that exceeded the 5% goal](#) — are available. You can also view the [FAFSA Challenge Leaderboard](#), which includes all of the trophy winners listed below.

**“MVP” (Have the highest FAFSA completion rate through March 30, 2018)**

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

*Medium school: College Academy at Broward College, Davie, Broward County*

*Small school: School for Advanced Studies – South, 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 30, 2018)**

*Large school: Melbourne Senior High School, Melbourne, Brevard County*

*Medium school: Miami Arts Charter, Miami, Miami-Dade County & Lake Wales Senior High School, Lake Wales, Polk County*

*Small school: Youth Co-Op Preparatory High School, Hialeah, Miami-Dade County*

*Large school district: Polk County*

*Small school district: Hardee County*

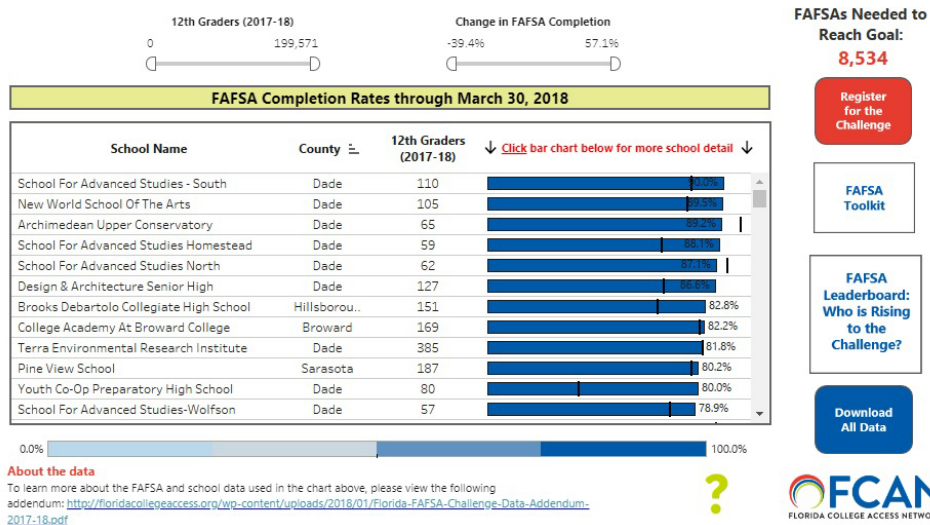
New to this year’s FAFSA Challenge is the “50/50 Club,” which recognizes schools and districts that have 50% or more students who are eligible for free- and reduced-priced lunches and that reach at least 50% FAFSA completion by the end of March. The 2018 “50/50 Club” includes [all Gulf District Schools as well as 38 schools representing 10 other counties.](#)

**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 FCAN’s [Florida FAFSA Challenge 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 12th 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.

FCAN 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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