



FREE PLANNING RESOURCE

School Year-End Recognition & Awards Planning Checklist

A step-by-step checklist to plan, budget, order, and deliver school year-end awards on time. Print it, share it with your team, and check off each step as you go.

Step 1 • Set Your Budget (8-10 weeks out)

- Lock a total recognition budget early in the semester so you order from a plan.
- Account for the awards themselves (plaques, trophies, medals, certificates).
- Add engraving and personalization costs, often priced per item or character.
- Include shipping and possible rush fees that rise closer to the event date.
- Budget for the ceremony itself — banquet, assembly, or graduation venue.

Step 2 • Decide Who You Are Recognizing

- Academic honors such as honor roll, top GPA, and subject awards.
- Athletic recognition — MVPs, team awards, and season milestones.
- Clubs, arts, and activities (band, drama, robotics, student council).
- Staff and volunteers — teachers, coaches, and parent helpers who rarely get public credit.
- Finalize a headcount per category so ordering quantities are exact.

Step 3 • Choose the Right Award Types

Award Type	Best For
Plaques	Academic honors, coach and teacher recognition, leadership awards. Generous engraving space.
Trophies & Crystal	Premium, high-occasion honors like Student of the Year and championship recognition.
Medals & Ribbons	Recognizing many students at once — field day, honor roll, and team programs.
Certificates & Custom	Class-wide participation, or flagship honors that signal an exceptional achievement.

Step 4 • Build Your Ordering Timeline

Work backward from your ceremony or distribution date.

When	Do This
8-10 weeks out	Finalize budget, categories, and recipient list.
6-8 weeks out	Choose award types and request a quote to confirm pricing and lead times.
4-6 weeks out	Submit final engraving details and approve proofs. Check every name's spelling.
2-3 weeks out	Receive, inspect, and stage the awards.
Event week	Confirm the run of show and who presents each award.

Step 5 • Personalize & Present

- Include full name, grade/achievement, and a short reason where space allows.
- Proof every engraving before approval — engraved errors mean a reorder.
- Plan the moment — banquet, assembly, or graduation ceremony.
- Say why each student or staff member is being honored with specific, sincere words.
- Prepare a backup list so no recipient is missed on the day.

Budget Worksheet

Line Item	Qty	Unit Cost	Subtotal
Plaques			
Trophies / crystal awards			
Medals / ribbons			
Certificates / custom awards			
Engraving & personalization			
Shipping / rush fees			
Ceremony costs			
TOTAL			

Ready to order your school year-end awards?

Custom plaques, trophies, medals, and certificates — produced and delivered before your event. Request a quote and our team will help you plan quantities, engraving, and timelines.

Request a quote: awards-america.com/get-a-custom-quote | Call: 800-462-9293