

Nomination Definitions

2026 Kane County Educator of the Year

Nominations can be made in (8) eight categories.

1. **Classroom Elementary/Early Childhood Teacher** (including licensed PreK) – A teacher who spends more than 50 percent of the time instructing students. A minimum 5 years teaching experience at this level.
2. **Classroom Middle School Teacher** – A teacher who spends more than 50 percent of the time instructing students. A minimum 5 years teaching experience at this level.
3. **Classroom High School Teacher** – A teacher who spends more than 50 percent of the time instructing students. A minimum 5 years teaching experience at this level.
4. **School Administrator** – District superintendents, assistant superintendents, principals, assistant principals, coordinators, directors, or others whose responsibilities are more than 50 percent administrative.
5. **Student Support Personnel** – School nurse, psychologist, social worker, guidance counselor, media/librarian/audio visual, or speech/language therapist who spends more than 50 percent of their time in the indicated field.
6. **Early Career Educator** – Teachers in their second to fifth year of teaching career may be nominated for the Outstanding Early Career Educator award. The criteria for this award are the same as for any teacher but publicly recognize the accomplishments of a teacher in the early years of their career.
7. **Nonpublic School** – Any position from a private/parochial school.
8. **Educational Service Personnel** – Includes secretaries, aides, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, crossing guards and others.

NOTE: A nominee may not be nominated more than once in the same category from year to year.

For an award to be given there must be at least 3 nominees in the category.

The 2026 awards will be presented at the Kane County Educator of the Year Awards Banquet on Friday, May 1, 2026, at the Q Center, 1405 North Fifth Avenue, St. Charles, Illinois.

Nomination Guidelines for all Categories EXCEPT Educational Service Personnel

Please note that these are guidelines, and we strongly encourage additional supporting materials in the nomination book.

Section 1 – Nominator’s or Committee’s Recommendation

Using specific descriptions and examples, explain what qualities the nominee possesses and what activities have been undertaken on behalf of schools and students that qualify the nominee as deserving of recognition.

Length: Minimum of two double-spaced pages, maximum of 4 pages

Section 2 - Letters of Recommendation

Letters of recommendation are required, at least one letter should be written by an individual in each of the following categories: Teacher, Administrator, Parent, Student and a Community Member. **Each letter should be labeled to indicate the category, and letters should be dated within the last 2 years.** Additional letters may be included from past years.

Section 3 – Professional Biography

Describe background and experiences that influenced the nominee to become an educator. How have they continuously participated in professional development to enhance content knowledge and improve teaching skills? What are their greatest contributions and accomplishments in education? This could include biographical information, education experiences, awards/honors, or other activities.

Include a current resume with the following information:

- A. Colleges and universities attended including postgraduate studies and indicate degrees earned.
- B. List teaching history indicating time period, grade level and subject area.
- C. List professional association memberships including information regarding offices held and other relevant activities.
- D. List examples of professional leadership.
- E. List awards and other recognition.

Other information as determined by the nominee or nominating committee includes:

Philosophy of Education – Describe the nominee’s personal feelings and beliefs about teaching, including their own ideas of what makes them an outstanding educator. Describe the rewards the nominee finds in teaching.

Student Success – How has the nominee demonstrated leadership skills and incorporated the Illinois Learning Standards in their teaching so that all students have the opportunity to meet and exceed standards?

Collaboration – How has the nominee demonstrated excellence as a contributing member of a collaborative learning culture? How has the nominee worked with colleagues, parents, families, and the community to improve teaching and learning, and foster teamwork among students?

Teaching Profession – What has the nominee done to strengthen and improve the teaching profession, i.e. leadership skills, collaboration, advocacy, professional development, Illinois Learning Standards, or other areas of current focus? What is or should be the basis for accountability in the teaching profession?

Nomination Guidelines for ONLY Educational Service Personnel

Please note that these are guidelines, and we strongly encourage additional supporting materials in the nomination book.

Section 1 – Nominator’s or Committee’s Recommendation

Using specific descriptions and examples, succinctly explain what qualities the nominee possesses and what activities have been undertaken on behalf of schools and students that qualify the nominee as deserving of recognition.

Length: Minimum of two double-spaced pages

Section 2 – Letters of Recommendation

A minimum of three letters of recommendation are required. Letters should be written by individuals from three of the following categories: Teacher, Administrator, Parent or Student. **Each letter should be labeled to indicate the category, and letters should be dated within the last 2 years.** Additional letters may be included from past years.

Section 3 – Professional Biography

Describe background and experiences that led to involvement in the educational system and activities which improve performance. This could include biographical information, educational background, awards, or other honors.

Section 4 – Response to Questions

In answering the questions below, provide specific examples and information which describe how the nominee has gone above and beyond normal job responsibilities to exemplify excellence.

1. How has the nominee demonstrated excellence in the fulfillment of duties?
2. How has the nominee demonstrated concern for children?
3. What positive effect has the nominee had on the school environment?
4. How has the nominee shown leadership or inspired others to achieve?
5. How has the nominee gone above and beyond what would be expected in the fulfillment of duties?