



REGIONAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION  
KANE COUNTY

John K. Jonak, Regional Superintendent

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Date: November 2025

To: Kane County Administrators

RE: **50th Annual Educator of the Year Awards Banquet - May 1, 2026**

Enclosed you will find the announcement, nomination form, and associated materials for our Kane County Educator of the Year Awards. We would appreciate your assistance in sharing this information by posting flyers in your building and sharing them with your department chairs, teachers, and other interested staff members. We will also send digital versions of these packets to you. Should you have dedicated Communications staff at your school or district, we will coordinate with them to help share this information as well.

We are proud to be able to continue offering this meaningful recognition program for our area educators. This event honors teachers, administrators, and support staff as representatives of the outstanding professionals we have in Kane County.

Mark your calendars, as the banquet will be held on **Friday, May 1, 2026** at the **Q Center**, located at **1405 North Fifth Avenue, St. Charles, Ill. 60174**. Social hour will begin at 5:30 p.m., with dinner at 6:30 p.m.

Nomination books are due to the Kane County Regional Office of Education (ROE) on **Friday, March 6, 2026**. For a video reference guide on what is required for these books, visit [kaneroe.org/eotynominationguide](https://kaneroe.org/eotynominationguide). All other information can be found at [kaneroe.org/eoty](https://kaneroe.org/eoty).

During March and April, ROE staff will reach out to arrange video interviews with nominees during the school day.

Tickets will be available through your district office beginning **Monday, March 23, 2026**. Thank you for your continued support in recognizing the exceptional educators who make a difference every day in Kane County.

Yours in Education,

John K. Jonak, Regional Superintendent  
*Kane County Regional Office of Education*

Katie Algrim, Assistant Regional Superintendent  
*Kane County Regional Office of Education*



# 2026 Nomination Form

1. Completed Nomination Form
2. Superintendent's Approval for Educator of the Year Nomination Form
3. Local Nominating Committee Form
4. Nomination based on attached guidelines.

*Please note that these are minimum guidelines. We encourage the inclusion of any other supporting documents, materials, photos, pictures and/or drawings in their nomination books.*

School Colors: \_\_\_\_\_



REGIONAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION  
KANE COUNTY

John K. Jonak, Regional Superintendent

**Superintendent's Approval for Educator of the Year Nomination**

To the Kane County Regional Office of Education,

This letter serves to confirm my approval for the nomination of the following individual for the Educator of the Year event. I have reviewed their qualifications and support their candidacy.

**Nominee's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Nominee's Category:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School District:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed Name of Superintendent:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Superintendent:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## LOCAL NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Nominees should be exceptionally skillful and dedicated individuals in any district or school, pre-kindergarten through grade 12, who are planning to continue in an **active** role in education. Nominations shall be made without regard to age, sex, race, religion, or education position. Nominees should have the respect and admiration of students, parents, and co-workers and play active and useful roles in their communities as well as in the schools, distinguishing themselves as leaders. Their most important quality should be their superior ability to inspire the love of learning in students of all backgrounds and abilities.

It is expected that nominations will be a joint effort of teachers and administrators. A cooperative effort will strengthen this program, which is designed to honor outstanding members of the profession and promote awareness of the quality education being provided in our schools.

*(Must Be Typed)*

Nominee's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

|  |              |              |               |             |
|--|--------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|
|  | <i>Title</i> | <i>First</i> | <i>Middle</i> | <i>Last</i> |
|--|--------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|

District: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the nominee aware of his/her nomination?      Yes      No

If not, when will they be notified? \_\_\_\_\_

- Nominee's Category: (See Attached Definitions)
- ☐ Elementary Teacher (including licensed PreK)
  - ☐ Middle School Teacher
  - ☐ High School Teacher
  - ☐ School Administrator
  - ☐ Student Support Personnel
  - ☐ Early Career Educator
  - ☐ Nonpublic School
  - ☐ Educational Service Personnel

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

*I have read this nomination form in full and understand that all nominees are subject to being photographed and videotaped for production and publicity purposes by the Regional Office of Education. This may or may not be limited to photo, video, print materials, newspaper, social media and electronic newsletters.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson of Nominating Committee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson Contact Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson Email Address

LIST OF STAFF ON NOMINATING COMMITTEE

LIST OF ADMINISTRATORS ON NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Please return this form, along with all required documentation by **Friday, March 6, 2026**, to the Kane County Regional Office of Education, **28 N. 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Geneva, Illinois 60134**. Downloadable and printable forms are available on our website at [www.kaneroe.org](http://www.kaneroe.org).

## **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?

# Educator of the Year Candidate Nomination Materials Evaluation Rubric

Candidate Identification \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Category:                      1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7                      8  
                                  Classroom Elementary Teacher    Classroom Middle School Teacher    Classroom High School Teacher    School Administrator    Student Support Personnel    Early Career Educator    Nonpublic School    Educational Service Personnel

| SECTION                                   | 1                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 2                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 3                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 4                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Points |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| Nominator's Recommendation                | Uses descriptions and examples but <b>does not explain</b> 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. | Uses descriptions and examples <b>with little explanation</b> of 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. | Uses <b>specific</b> descriptions and examples that <b>adequately</b> explains 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. | Uses specific descriptions and <b>numerous examples</b> that <b>exceptionally</b> 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. |        |
| Letters of Recommendation                 | <b>Less than five letters</b> of recommendation were submitted.                                                                                                                                                                  | Five letters of recommendation are submitted but are <b>not from three of the following categories:</b> Teacher, Administrator, Parent, Student, or Community Member                                                                   | A minimum of five letters of recommendation is submitted. Letters are written from <b>three of the following categories:</b> Teacher, Administrator, Parent or Student, or Community Member                                                          | Multiple letters of recommendation are submitted <b>for all categories:</b> Teacher, Administrator, Parent, Student, and Community Member                                                                                                                       |        |
| Professional Biography                    | The Biography description is <b>missing two or more elements required</b> including influence, continuous professional development, contributions and resume                                                                     | The Biography description is <b>missing one or more elements required</b> including influence, continuous professional development, contributions and resume                                                                           | The Biography description <b>contains all required elements</b> including influence, continuous professional development, contributions and resume.                                                                                                  | The biography description <b>contains all required elements</b> and is <b>written</b> in a <b>professional</b> manner.                                                                                                                                          |        |
| Other Information/ Responses to Questions | No additional information was submitted                                                                                                                                                                                          | Information submitted <b>did not describe how the nominee has gone beyond the normal job responsibilities.</b>                                                                                                                         | Information submitted documents <b>that the nominee goes beyond his/her job responsibilities.</b>                                                                                                                                                    | Information submitted included <b>specific examples and information that described how the nominee has gone beyond normal job responsibilities to exemplify excellence.</b>                                                                                     |        |
| Comments                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |        |

Total Score \_\_\_\_\_

***This rubric will be used as a guide for the judging of the Educator of the Year nomination books.***



Do you know an exceptional educator, administrator, or support staff member in your school that inspires their students and colleagues? The Kane County Regional Office of Education invites you to nominate them for Kane County Educator of the Year! Nominees should be passionate individuals in any Kane County school, public or private, PreK-12, who plan to continue an active role in education.

School representatives and nominees will be cordially invited to the 50th Kane County Educator of the Year banquet, which will serve as a celebration educational staff in all roles, as well as a showcase of the impact they make on their students and their communities.

**Friday, May 1, 2026**

Q Center, 1405 North Fifth Avenue, St. Charles, IL

**5:30 p.m. Social Hour • 6:30 p.m. Dinner**