

The 7th Annual

Teacher Appreciation Awards

A celebration of educational excellence in Southwestern PA.

Nomination Information Guide

Join us in recognizing the excellence of outstanding educators, administrators, and school staff members participating in The Education Partnership's programs by nominating a qualifying individual for the **7th Annual Teacher Appreciation Awards**.

The objectives for the Teacher Appreciation Awards include:

- Focusing attention on quality and exemplary educators;
- Increasing public awareness of the importance of quality educators; and
- Providing tangible recognition of achievement, earning the respect of colleagues, and enhancing professional opportunities for educators of The Education Partnership.



Timeline of Nominations, Selection, and Voting

March 3, 2026	March 23, 2026	March 24- May 1, 2026	May 12, 2026	May 19, 2026	June 3, 2026
Nomination Window Opens	Nomination Window Closes	Selection	Finalist Voting Opens	Finalist Voting Closes	Award Ceremony and Winners Announced



The Nomination Details

Nominations for 2026 will open on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at 9 am. All nominations must be submitted by Monday, March 23, 2026, at 5:00 pm. Only school employees from one of the 231 TEP partner public, charter, or private schools are eligible for nomination.

See the award categories below to ensure your nomination is placed in the correct pool of candidates. All nominations must be submitted online. No emailed or mailed nominations will be considered. When filling out the online nomination form, please include all contact information for the nominee and the nominator.

Scan the nomination QR or visit
www.TheEducationPartnership.org



Awards Categories

Award Category	Eligibility
Rookie Teacher of the Year	This award is reserved for new teachers (teachers with 1 year or less of teaching experience) in any grade level, who exemplify excellence at their school.
Pre-K Teacher of the Year	This award is reserved for those teachers who teach early childhood education grade levels, PreK , and who exemplify excellence at their school.
Elementary Teacher of the Year	This award is reserved for those teachers who teach elementary school grade levels, K to 5th grade , and who exemplify excellence at their school.
Middle School Teacher of the Year	This award is reserved for those teachers who teach middle school grade levels, 6th to 8th grade , and who exemplify excellence at their school.
High School Teacher of the Year	This award is reserved for those teachers who teach high school grade levels, 9th to 12th grade , and who exemplify excellence at their school.
Principal of the Year	This award is reserved for principals, assistant principals, school directors, or other leadership administrators who exemplify excellence at their school.
Outstanding Non-Instructional/ Support Staff of the Year	This award is reserved for school support staff who positively impact their school by going above and beyond. This could be counselors, librarians, custodial staff, administrative support staff, cafeteria staff, bus, and other transportation staff, health and safety support staff , and all other staff members who do not fit into one of the other categories.

Questions?

NATALIE DELVECCHIO-WOLFE

ADVANCEMENT MANAGER

NATALIE@THEEDUCATIONPARTNERSHIP.ORG

FAQ's

Who is eligible to nominate a school employee for one of the awards?

Any teacher, student, parent, school administrator, school staff member, or community member of any of our 8 counties (Allegheny, Armstrong, Butler, Beaver, Fayette, Greene, Westmoreland, and Washington) may make nominations. Self-nominations are also allowed.

Who is eligible to receive an award?

Any educator or staff member who works at any of The Education Partnership's 231 partner schools may be nominated.

What is the deadline for nominations?

Nominations must be digitally submitted using the online form on or before March 23, 2026, at 5:00 pm.

How do I know which category is most appropriate for my nominee?

Please refer to individual award descriptions in the chart provided for eligibility requirements.

Where should I send nominations?

Nominations are only accepted through the online form provided. Any nominations emailed, mailed, or otherwise received will not be considered.

Can I start a nomination form and save it to finish later?

No. The form cannot be saved. You'll need to complete all questions at once to submit your nomination. Please make sure you have: Nominee's first and last name Nominee's email address and phone number Be prepared to answer the following question 1) Briefly describe the qualities that make your educator, principal, or non-instructional staff exceptional. 2) Tell a story or give specific examples of how your nominee champions at least one of TEP's five values: **Equity, Service, Resourcefulness, Integrity, and Respect.**

How detailed should the nomination be?

The more time spent on writing your prompts can only help a nominated individual. Please, thoughtfully answer the following questions about your nominator educator: 1) Briefly describe the qualities that make your educator, principal, or non-instructional staff exceptional. 2) Tell a story or give specific examples of how your nominee champions at least one of TEP's five values: **Equity, Service, Resourcefulness, Integrity, and Respect.**

FAQ's

How are finalists selected?

The Education Partnership verifies that all nominees are eligible and that nomination information is complete. Nominations are then sorted and forwarded to the selection committee. The selection committee uses a rubric for judging the submissions. All nominees will be anonymous during the review. After the selection committee submits its recommendations, the rubrics are reviewed, and up to three finalists per category will move forward. All finalists will be contacted before the opening of voting. Finalists have the decision to decline their nomination. Once all three finalists have accepted the nomination, the finalists will be announced publicly.

Please note: If none of the nominees meet the criteria for a specific award, a recipient will not be selected.

Who may vote?

Any teacher, student, parent, school administrator, school staff member, or citizen of our eight counties (Allegheny, Armstrong, Butler, Beaver, Fayette, Greene, Westmoreland, and Washington) may make nominations. Self-voting is permitted. You may only vote once for each award category.

When will the winners be announced?

The awards will be presented at an in-person reception on June 3, 2026. All finalists will be invited to attend the reception ceremony. Winners will be announced live at the event.

How are awards publicized?

The Education Partnership may send a press release announcing the selection of each award recipient to employers and media outlets. All award recipients are announced in The Education Partnership Newsletter and on The Education Partnership's website.

What are The Education Partnership's partner schools?

The Education Partnership serves 231 schools. For a full list of schools, please visit: <https://theeducationpartnership.org/partner-schools/>

My business or company might be interested in sponsoring this event. Who do I contact?

We have several sponsorship packages available for this year's event. Please email Natalie DelVecchio-Wolfe, at natalie@theeducationpartnership.org for more information.