



Recognizing Inspirational School Employees (RISE) Award Criteria

Purpose

The purpose of the Recognizing Inspirational School Employees (RISE) Award is to recognize and promote the commitment and excellence exhibited by full- or part-time classified school employees who provide exemplary service to students in pre-kindergarten through high school.¹

Timeframe

The U.S. Department of Education (Department) invites the governor of each state to nominate up to two classified school employees by November 1, 2020. The Secretary of Education will select a single classified school employee to receive the RISE Award for that school year by spring 2021. The Department will communicate the selectee's story in order to inspire other innovative practices and excellence among classified school employees.

Eligibility

Governors shall consider nominations submitted by local educational agencies, school administrators, professional associations, labor organizations, educational service agencies, nonprofit entities, private schools and their representatives, parents and students, and any other groups they deem appropriate.

Submissions

Governors shall document nominees' performance in the following areas in the Nominee Submission Form by November 1, 2020, including signatures from the applicable school, school district, and state officials indicated in the form. They may wish to cite testimony from letters of recommendation.

Selection Criteria:

Nominees must, at a minimum, demonstrate excellence in the following areas:

- (A) Work performance
- (B) School and community involvement

¹ A classified school employee is an employee of a state or any political subdivision of a state, or an employee of a nonprofit entity, who works in any grade from pre-kindergarten through high school in any of the following occupational specialties: paraprofessional, clerical and administrative services, transportation services, food and nutrition services, custodial and maintenance services, security services, health and student services, technical services, and skilled trades. The terms used have the meaning given the terms in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

- (C) Leadership and commitment
- (D) Local support (from co-workers, school administrators, community members, etc., who speak to the nominee's exemplary work)
- (E) Enhancement of classified school employees' image in the community and schools

Governors are also invited to document any additional areas that make the nominee worthy of this award. They are encouraged to make every effort to ensure that a diverse range of individuals, representative of the different categories of classified employees and serving distinct student populations, are considered for nomination.

Recognition

Governors are invited to recognize their nominees in every classified employee category, as they deem appropriate, at the state level. In addition, the Department will announce the national honoree and present the individual with a plaque or other similar memento in the spring. The award conveys no federal funding to the honoree or related entities.

Technical Assistance

The RISE Award program coordinator will provide ongoing communications to governors' offices and any necessary technical assistance.

Statutory Authority

The Secretary of Education is responsible for administering the RISE Award, which is authorized under Public Law No. 116-13.