Teacher and Principal of the Year

Information + Online Portal Webinar for Candidates



Zoom Meeting Preparation



- Please make sure your phone or computer is muted to minimize background noise.
 - To do this, hover over the bottom left-hand side of your screen and click "Mute."



- Please make sure you have turned off your camera to save bandwidth and prevent any connectivity issues.
 - To do this, hover over the bottom left-hand side of your screen and click "Stop Video."



 Please submit questions during the presentation in the "Chat" function located on the bottom of your screen.



Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Teacher and Principal of the Year Programs
- Meet Our Current Teacher/Principal of the Year
- Benefits of Participation + Gala
- Meet our Partners
- State-level Application Timeline + Materials
- Local and State-level Processes
- Candidate's Online Portal
- Informational Calls and Next Steps
- **Resources and Questions**



Teacher and Principal of the Year Programs



Teacher and Principal of the Year Programs

- The Louisiana Department of Education recognizes that great teachers and school leaders are critical to student success.
- Annually, the Department, in partnership with <u>Dream Teachers</u> and the <u>Louisiana Association of Principals</u>, honors the state's most exceptional educators through the Teacher and Principal of the Year programs.
- The Louisiana Teacher and Principal of the Year awards programs provide an opportunity to acknowledge those educators who are making exceptional gains with students.
- Congratulations to the educators who have been named as school system-level candidates and thank you for all that you do!

Meet the Current State Teacher and Principal of the Year Honorees





2026 OVERALL TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Regena Hartley Beard

ZACHARY COMMUNITY
SCHOOL DISTRICT





Benefits of Participating in Teacher/Principal of the Year



Benefits to Candidates

Provides the teacher or the principal the opportunity to:

- Develop and amplify their voice to advocate for the profession.
- Empower participation in policy discussions to improve education for all children.
- Hone their teaching/leadership skills through professional learning opportunities.
- Serve as the representative to promote the education profession.
- Build relationships with other exemplary educators throughout Louisiana.



20th Annual Cecil J. Picard Educator Excellence Awards Gala

- Educators named as state-level honorees are invited to the Gala.
- On Saturday, July 25, 2026, the Department, in partnership with Dream Teachers, will host the 20th Annual Cecil J. Picard Educator Excellence Awards Gala at the World War II Museum in New Orleans.
- Several different award program honorees will be recognized and celebrated on this evening.
- During the event, the division-level and overall honorees will be named.
- The Educator Excellence Awards Gala is Louisiana's most prestigious educational awards celebration of the year.

Honorees at the Gala











Meet Our Partners



Dream Teachers

- Visit the <u>Dream Teachers website</u> to learn more.
- For questions, email <u>theresa@dreamteachers.org.</u>





Louisiana Association of Principals (LAP)

- For more information about LAP, visit the LAP website.
- For questions, contact Karen Triche, LAP Executive Director, at karen.triche@laprincipals.org.





Teacher and Principal of the Year Timeline



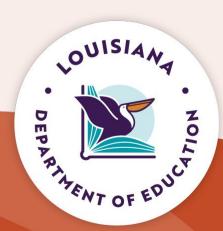
Timeline

Nominations Portal	September 2-September 30, 2025	Stakeholders nominate teachers/principals. Nominations information is shared with school systems for their consideration.	
Applications Process	October 1, 2025 - January 14, 2026	 October 1, 2025-applications released January 14, 2026-applications due in the online portal 	
Semifinalists	March 17, 2026	48 honorees (24 teachers and 24 principals)	
Finalists	May TBD, 2026	18 honorees (9 teachers and 9 principals)	
Teacher Leader Summit	May 26-28, 2026	All semifinalists and finalists will receive a VIP ticket and will receive an invitation to a reception	
Interviews	June TBD, 2026	(18) Finalist interviews	
Gala	July 25, 2026	Celebrate all Teacher/Principal + other honorees.	

<u>Timeline</u>



Teacher and Principal of the Year Rubric and Application Materials



Teacher/Principal of the Year Criteria + Rubric

An exemplary candidate is one who:

- Demonstrates **excellence and expertise** in the field, **guiding students** (and for principals, also teachers) of all backgrounds and abilities to **achieve success**.
- Demonstrates leadership and innovation in and outside of the school building walls, creating pathways for students/teachers to excel.
- Builds collaborative relationships with colleagues, students, and families to create a school environment that is respectful, welcoming, and positively impacts student growth and achievement.
- Deliberately connects the classroom/school to the community to positively impact the students, school, and community.
- Is **inspiring**, **compelling**, **professional**, and expresses themselves in an **engaging and clear way**, and demonstrates the ability to **connect with and represent** the state.

School systems are encouraged to select candidates who most closely match the criteria to participate in the state-level process.

Principal of the Year Application

The Principal of the Year application consists of the following components:

- Basic information, including a <u>bio</u> (written in third person) and social media quote
- Résumé (limit: two pages)
- Two recent years of student success data (SLTs or other data)
 - Please ensure that the data submitted does not contain Student Personal Identifying Information (PII).
- Up to three letters of recommendation
- Candidate consent form (teacher waiver)
- Student consent form (one for each students in video/photos/etc.)
- Responses to two written reflection questions and one video prompt

Click link to view the Principal of the Year Application.



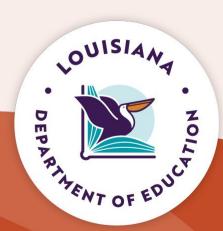
Teacher of the Year Application

- The Teacher of the Year application consists of the following components:
 - Basic information, including a bio (written in third person) and social media quote
 - Résumé (limit: two pages)
 - Two recent years of student success data (SLTs or other data)
 - Applicants must ensure that the data submitted does not contain Student Personal Identifying Information (PII).
 - Link to teaching video (YouTube link)
 - Lesson plan which corresponds to teaching video
 - Up to three letters of recommendation
 - Candidate consent form (teacher waiver)
 - Student consent form (one for each students in video/photos/etc.)
 - Responses to two written reflection questions and one video prompt
- Click link to view the <u>Teacher of the Year Application</u>.

Teacher of the Year Video

- Teaching videos should not exceed 15 minutes and may be edited. Teaching may take place in person, virtually, and/or be hybrid.
- Teaching video suggestion-Divide the video into three segments. Suggested segment time is listed as a guide only, as candidates may utilize the time as needed.
 - Description of the lesson + passion statement (three minutes or less)
 - Classroom lesson (ten minutes or less)
 - Debrief of lesson (three minutes or less)
- In the state-level online application, videos must be submitted as a YouTube video link.
- Click link to view the <u>Teacher Video Filming Guide</u>.

Application Tips and Pointers



Application Tips

- Organize each response into clear paragraphs with smooth transitions.
- The first and last sentences should be impactful, aligned, and draw in the reader.
- Proofread for spelling, grammar, and clarity.
- Avoid general statements; show how the candidate meets each criterion.
- Use detailed examples that illustrate the candidate's impact.
- Include **evidence** where possible (e.g., "supported 150 students," "reduced absences by 20%," etc.).
- Describe results and outcomes, not just actions. (Example: "My uniform closet restored student confidence and increased attendance.")
- Show how the candidate's work contributes to school success, student well-being, and community engagement.

Application Tips

- Include quotes, testimonials, or data that demonstrate stakeholder respect and support.
- Emphasize **leadership qualities**, even in non-supervisory roles.
- Describe what makes the candidate stand out their creativity, initiative, or leadership style.
- Highlight innovative practices or special contributions (e.g., creating a new program, mentoring students, leading a community project).
- Show evidence that their work serves as a model for others.
- Use the same tone, formatting, and level of detail throughout the application.
- Ensure that examples in different sections complement rather than repeat each other.
- Reinforce recurring themes (e.g., dedication, leadership, community service).
- Let the personality and passion of the nominee shine through.
- Write authentically use language that feels genuine and heartfelt.
- Emphasize the **human impact** of their work how they uplift, inspire, and serve others.



School System-Level Process



School System-Level Process

- All school systems are encouraged to select up to three overall Teacher and Principal of the Year finalists, one per division (elementary, middle, and high), to send to the state-process.
- School systems may use the state's applications/materials or use their own process for to identify local-level honorees.
- School systems determine the grades in the division levels, as well as who they include in their process, such as librarians, etc.
- Compass/<u>LEADS/LES</u> data (as available) is considered in the state-level competition.



Resources



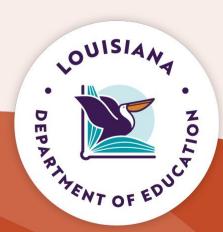
Teacher and Principal of the Year Materials

Please share the links below with your candidates for easy access to all application materials.

- Application-Principal of the Year
- Application-Teacher of the Year
- Application Sample-Principal of the Year
- Application Sample-Teacher of the Year
- Consent Form-Candidate
- Consent Form-Student
- <u>Candidate Recommendation Form</u> (Optional)
- Professional Bio Guidelines
- Rubric-Teacher and Principal of the Year
- <u>Teaching Video Guide-Teacher of the Year</u>
- <u>Timeline-Teacher and Principal of the Year</u>



Candidate Online Application Portal



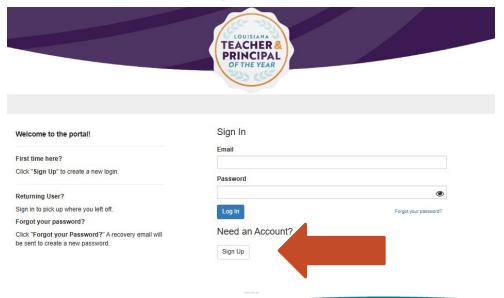
State-level Candidate Applications

- State-level Teacher and Principal of the Year candidate applications-
 - Due by 11:59 p.m. on **January 14, 2026**.
 - Must be submitted in the online application portal. (https://webportalapp.com/sp/login/ldoe-toy-poy-candidate 25-26)
- The portal works best when using Chrome as your web browser.



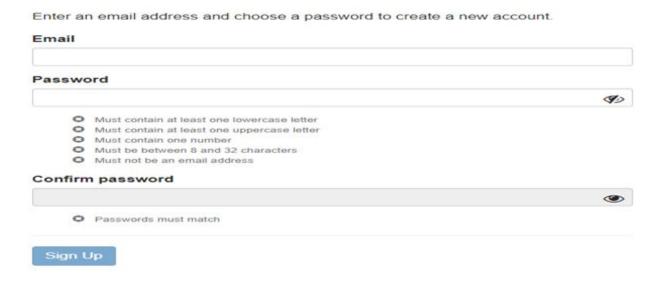
Set Up an Account

Select "Need an Account" to get started.



Set Up an Account

Create Username and Password



Create a Profile

Click "Create a Profile to Get Started."

To access/reference your previous years applications, please click them below:

2018/2019 TOY/POY Application 2019/2020 TOY/POY Application

2020/2021 TOY/POY Application

2021/2022 TOY/POY Application

This is only visible if you have entered an application in a previous year.

Please click "+Create a Profile to Get Started" to begin your Profile.

Please click the edit "Pen & Paper" icon to complete/edit your Profile. You can always view your Profile by clicking the "Eye" icon.

The Profile is always editable. You cannot start your application until you have completed the Profile.

Create a Profile to Get Started

Create a Profile

Add your information and click "Create Profile." Profile -

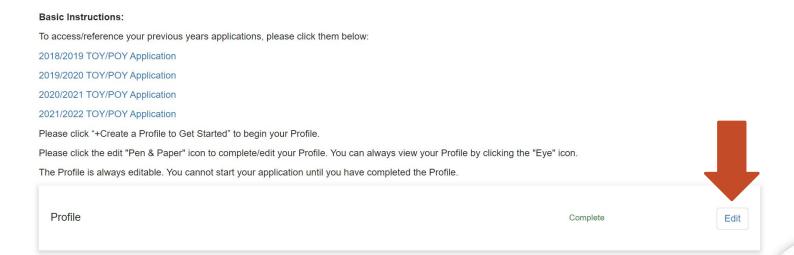


Email Address (Please enter the same email address here you used when you logged in.)	
School System/District (please start typing)	
Type to begin search	Ψ.
Schools (please start typing)	
Type to begin search	¥



Edit Profile Anytime-Keep Email Current

Click the "Edit" button to edit your profile at any time.



Get Started on Your Application

Begin your application by clicking "Get Started."

Basic Instructions:

To begin your application, click "+Get Started" on the Submission Card below. This will bring you to the application.

When you return to this Homepage, you can see the status of your application because the Submission Card will have a colored status bar at the bottom.

- If the status bar is grey, in color, your application is in a review status, and no action needs to be taken at the moment.
- If the status bar is orange, that means that there is an action/step that you need to take. A form needs to be filled out, etc.
- If the status bar is red, that means that there is an error and you should reach out to an administrator.

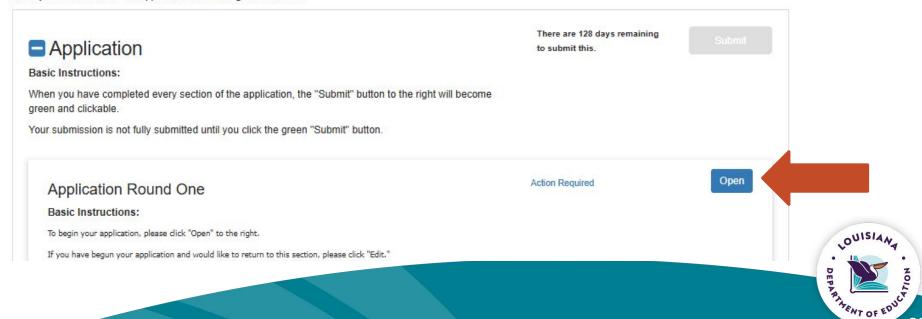


Get Started on Your Application

Select "Open."

When you have completed every section of the submission, the "Submit" button will turn green. This indicates that you can now fully submit your application.

Once you click "Submit" the application will no longer be editable.

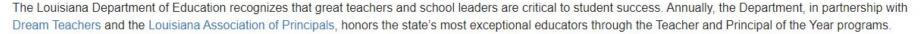


Select Teacher or Principal of the Year

Louisiana Department of Education: A Call For Excellent Educators

Which award do you want to apply for? *

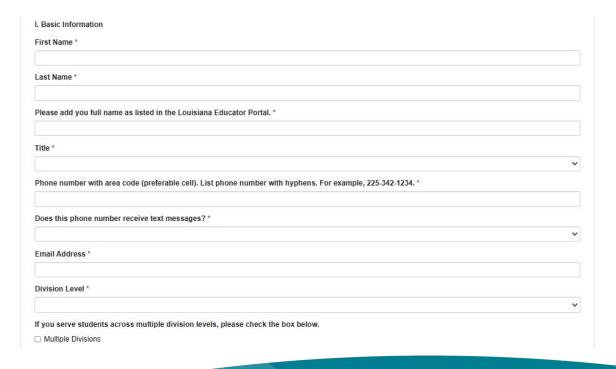
- Teacher of the Year
- O Principal of the Year



The Louisiana Teacher and Principal of the Year awards programs provide an opportunity to acknowledge those educators who are making exceptional gains with students. Their commitment to student success exemplifies Louisiana's teaching profession.



Add Basic Information



Document Naming Convention

- When uploading all documents, photos, videos, etc., in the online portal, please label each document with the prescribed naming conventions, as follows:
 - TOY or POY_ First Name Last Name_Document Name.
 - For example:
 - TOY_Mary Smith_ Reflection Response 1 Upload
 - POY_John Doe_Letter of Rec 1



Reflection Question One- Teachers

- Add Reflection Question Response (up to 750 words) and Optional Upload if desired.
- Teacher's Reflection Question One

VII. Written Reflection Response One

Describe a content lesson or unit that defines you as a teacher and include how you engage students of all backgrounds and abilities in the learning. In your response, include how your deliberate instructional decisions create student learning, as well as reveal your beliefs about teaching and learning. (750 words or less)

Add Reflection Response One He): *	



Reflection Question One- Principals

- Add Reflection Question Response (up to 750 words) and Optional Upload if desired.
- Principal's Reflection Question One

VII. Written Reflection Response One

Describe how you engage students and teachers of all backgrounds and abilities in effective teaching and learning on a daily basis. In your response, discuss the deliberate actions you take that positively impact student and educator success, as well as what these actions reveal about your beliefs about leadership, teaching, and learning. (750 words or less)

Add Reflection Response One Here: *					



Reflection Question Two-Teachers

- Add Reflection Question Response (up to 750 words) and Optional Upload if desired.
- Teacher's Reflection Question Two

VIII. Written Reflection Response Two

Describe specific ways in which you deliberately connect your students with the community. Show how these community connections dissolve classroom walls and are used to impact student learning and success. (750 words or less)

Add Reflection Response Two Here: *					
					2



Reflection Question Two- Principals

- Add Reflection Question Response (up to 750 words) and Optional Upload if desired.
- Principal's Reflection Question Two

VIII. Written Reflection Response Two

Thinking about the Louisiana Leader Rubric, what program, activity, or leadership effort are you most proud of that demonstrates your ability to set a clear vision, strengthen teaching and learning, and engage your school community? What challenges did you face in establishing this work, and what successes or impact have you experienced that other school leaders across the state could learn from or replicate? (750 words or less)

Add Reflection Response Two Here: *			
			2



Video and Education Issue-Teachers

Add your video URL.

IX. Video Response

What work best describes you as a leader and/or an innovator? In your response, explain your role, the positive impact this work has made on teachers, students, and/or the education profession, and also share the status of this work today. (2 minutes or less)

Add the YouTube video URL in the space below.

Add your You lube video URL Here: (video should be 2 minutes or less) *				
	ere: (video should be 2 min	ere: (video should be 2 minutes or less) *	ere: (video should be 2 minutes or less) *	ere: (video should be 2 minutes or less) *

Your YouTube video link visibility must be "Public" so the application reviewers may view your video. Before adding your link, please send it to a friend and have them check it to make sure it is viewable.

X. Education Issue

What is an education issue you are most passionate about? Add your response in the textbox below in five words or less, Ex: Student Voice and Empowerment *

Video and Education Issue-Principals

Add your video URL.

IX. Video Response

Describe specific ways in which you empower your students and teachers to build community connections. In your response, describe specific ways you empower students and teachers to build these community connections, and explain how such partnerships dissolve the walls of the classroom or school and positively impact student learning and success for all. (2 minutes or less)

Add the YouTube video URL in the space below.

Add your YouTube video URL Here: (video should be 2 minutes or less) *		

Your YouTube video link visibility must be "Public" so the application reviewers may view your video. Before adding your link, please send it to a friend and have them check it to make sure it is viewable.

X. Education Issue

What is an education issue you are most passionate about? Add your response in the textbox below in five words or less, Ex: Student Voice and Empowerment *



Upload Documents

Résumé (two pages or less) Include chronological list of workplaces with specific years at each site. *

1 Choose File

Student Success Data 1 (SLTs or other recent data) Include Year *

▲ Choose File

This upload should be a document (no photo or video, for example)- i.e., the doc may be pdf, doc, docx

Student Success Data 2 (SLTs or other recent data) Include Year *

♣ Choose File

This upload should be a document (no photo or video, for example)- i.e., the doc may be pdf, doc, docx

Letter of Recommendation #1. *

1 Choose File



A candidate does not have to be certified to participate in the state-level
Teacher and Principal of the Year process. However, a strong candidate is
one who demonstrates a commitment to the education profession, as well
as meets the criteria.

Upload the most recent version of your teaching/educational leadership certificate. Certificates may be found on the Louisiana Educator Portal website here

Certificate Upload *

Select a file

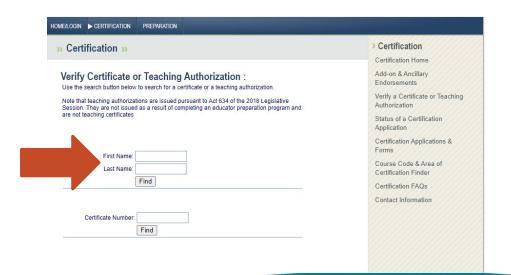


- Go to <u>Louisiana Educator Portal</u> website
- Select "Verify a Certificate or Teaching Authorization"





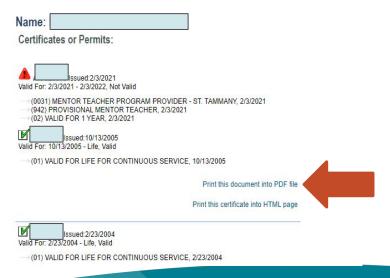
Enter First/Last Name (as appears on certificate) or Certificate Number



- If multiple names appear, click on the correct name.
- Enter First/Last Name (as appears on certificate) or Certificate Number

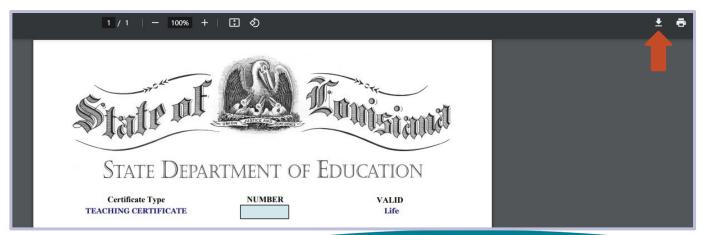


 Click on the first "Print this document into PDF file" that is located near your most recent information.





- Select download.
- Rename the document "TOY or POY_First Name_Last Name_Certificate" and upload to portal.



Add Teaching Video (Teachers Only)

Add teaching video URL and upload lesson plan.

I. Teaching Video			
ou may view the Teaching Video Guide here: https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/awards/teaching-video-guide.pdf?sfvrsn=76d8911f_8			
add your YouTube video URL in the textbox below (Note: Your YouTube video link visibility must be "Public" so the application reviewers may view your ideo. Before adding your link, please send it to a friend and have them check it to make sure it is viewable.)			
pload the lesson plan that corresponds to teaching video here. *			
is upload should be a document (no photo or video, for example)- i.e., the doc may be a pdf, doc, docx			
Select a file			

Upload Photos (Optional)

Upload headshot and photos with students. (optional)

VIII. Photos

Headshot (optional in initial application) - upload photo

♣ Choose File

This file should be a photo, such as jpg

Photo with Students (optional in initial application) - upload photo

♣ Choose File

This file should be a photo, such as jpg



Consent Forms

Complete candidate and student consent forms.

7. Consent Forms
Candidate Consent Form Candidates must acknowledge that they have read, understand, and agree to the terms included in the state provided consent form.
k to Candidate Consent Form: https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/awards/candidate-consent-form.docx?sfvrsn=9bd9911f_4
ase upload your signed (state) Candidate Consent Form here. *
supload should be a document (no photo or video, for example)- i.e., the doc may be a pdf, doc, docx
Select a file
ase type your name below to confirm your signature on the state's Candidate Consent Form. This will serve as your electronic signature.
ndidate Consent Form Signature: *
Student Consent Forms Student consent forms are needed for each student included in your state-level application, such as in photos, videos, etc. It is Student Consent Forms: https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/awards/student-consent-form.docx?sfvrsn=98d9911f_4 e students included in your state-level application, such as in photos and/or in your teaching video, etc.? Select yes or no below.*
ves v
ase scan all student consent forms into one large PDF and upload here. *
supload should be a document (no photo or video, for example)- i.e., the doc may be a pdf, doc, docx
Select a file
ase type your name below to confirm that you have Student Consent Forms on file for each student included in your state-level application. This will serve as your ctronic signature.
dent Consent Form Signature: *

Supplemental Uploads (Optional)

Add additional uploads if desired.

You may add up to three additional uploads to your application. These uploads can be in any format, such as photos, documents, video, etc. Please label using the prescribed naming convention.

Additional Upload 1

♣ Choose File

Additional Upload 2

1 Choose File

Additional Upload 3

1 Choose File



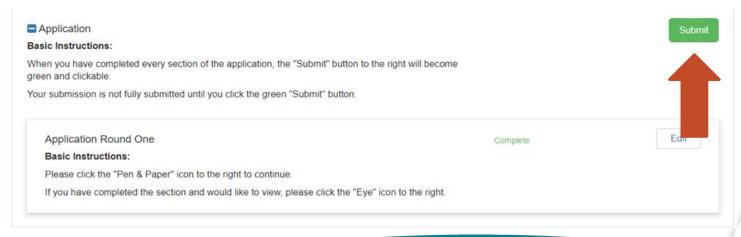
Final Signature

Add signature and save or submit.

XVI. Signatures
Please type your name in the textbox below. By typing your name below, this will act as your electronic signature. Your submission should be supported by your school system.
Applicant's Name (typed) *
Signature Date: "
Questions
 Visit the Awards page on the Louisiana Believes website. Email excellenteducators@la.gov
Select "Save Draft" when you have not completed all of the required fields and want to save work and return later to complete. Select "Mark Complete" when all fields have been completed. Before submitting your application, save all components of your application electronically for future reference.
at saved at 12:09:16 PM

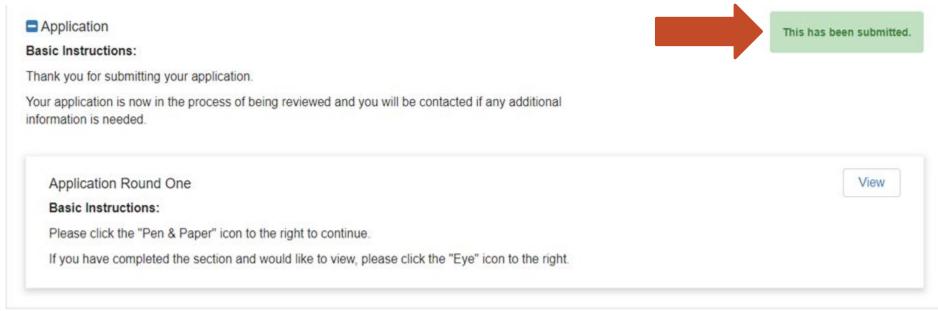
Submit

- When you have completed your application and are ready to submit, save the draft, select "Mark Complete".
- After selecting "Mark Complete", you will be directed to the submission page.
- Select "Submit".
 - Note: If a required element has not been completed, the portal will not let you submit.



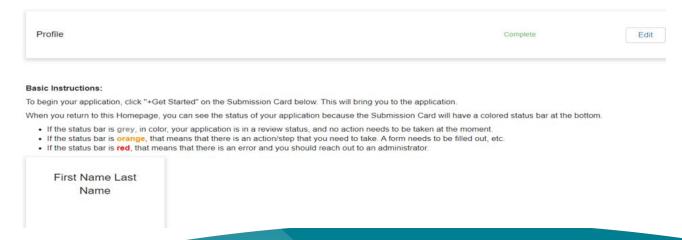
Successful Submission Verification

 After submitting your application, you will see the "This has been submitted" message.



After Submitting

After submitting your application, you may edit your profile at any time.
 You will not be able to edit your application and it will display as under review.



Informational Calls and Materials



Teacher and Principal of the Year Materials

- All application materials may be found in the Teacher and Principal of the Year Resources on the <u>Staff and Educator Awards</u> page.
- Join an <u>informational/help desk call</u> for tips and pointers on creating a strong state-level application and to view a tutorial of the online application portal.



Online Portal Help Desk Form



Online Portal Help Desk Form

• Please complete the <u>Online Portal Help Desk Form</u> if you anticipate issues submitting information in the portal by January 14.

Additional Awards Opportunities



Award Programs Information

- Information about all <u>award programs</u> offered at the Department can be found on the <u>Award Initiatives Overview</u> Document.
- All stakeholders are encouraged to review and participate in these programs.
- For general questions, please contact <u>excellenteducators@la.gov</u>.



Questions



Questions

• For questions related to the Teacher and Principal of the Year programs, please email excellenteducators@la.gov.

Congratulations to all Teacher and Principal of the Year Honorees! Thank you for all that you do!

