



School Support/Health Provider

2026-2027

The Louisiana Department of Education recognizes that exceptional school support employees and school health service providers play an essential role in helping students thrive. Every day, these dedicated professionals create safe, welcoming, and supportive learning environments; remove barriers to success; build meaningful relationships; and help ensure students are healthy, connected, and prepared to learn.

Through the Outstanding School Support Employee of the Year and School Health Service Provider of the Year programs, the Department proudly recognizes individuals whose dedication, compassion, leadership, and service make a meaningful difference in the lives of students, schools, and communities.

The awards honor outstanding school support employees — including teacher aides, paraprofessionals, school bus drivers, food service workers, clerical, custodial, and maintenance personnel, and other non-certificated employees — as well as school health service providers, including therapists, audiologists, nurses, nurse practitioners, licensed practical nurses, and licensed behavioral health providers. Together, these programs celebrate the professionals whose daily work helps students feel supported, valued, healthy, and prepared to succeed.

Selection Process and Timeline

- **Nomination Portal Opens**
 - August 11, 2026- September 11, 2026
 - The nominations portal is open from August 11 to September 11.
 - Upon portal close, the nomination information is shared with school systems.
- **Application Release**
 - September 22
 - The Department releases Outstanding School Support Employee of the Year and School Health Service Provider of the Year application materials for the 2026-2027 school year.
- **Informational Overview Calls for Candidates and Stakeholders**
 - September 2026 - December 2026
 - To assist candidates, coordinators, and stakeholders with the application process, informational calls and help desk calls will be conducted. On these calls, information will be shared about the applications/timeline/process, as well as steps for using the online portals.
- **State-level Applications Due**
 - December 10, 2026
 - School systems may select up to:
 - OSSE- three support staff, one for elementary, middle, and high, for state-level consideration.

- SHSPY- five school health service providers — one physical therapist, one occupational therapist, one nurse, one speech therapist, and one behavioral provider for state-level consideration.
- By December 10, candidates are to submit their applications in the online application portal.

- **Finalists Announced**

- February TBD, 2027
- The Department names:
 - 9 OSSE Finalists
 - 5 SHSPY Finalists

- **BESE Recognition**

- April 14, 2027
- The 2027 Outstanding School Support Employee of the Year and School Health Service Provider of the Year finalists will be recognized and celebrated at the April BESE Meeting, following a reception at the Old State Capitol.
 - 1 overall OSSE honoree and 1 overall SHSPY Honoree will be named during the reception.

For questions regarding the Louisiana Teacher and Principal of the Year Award programs, please contact excellenteducators@la.gov.