

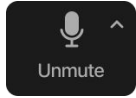
Teacher/Principal, New Teacher + Early Childhood Teacher/Leader of the Year Programs

Application Process Overview

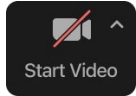


2025-2026 School Year

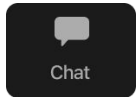
Zoom Meeting Preparation



- 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.

If you require an interpreter or have other accessibility needs for future LDOE meetings, please contact LDOEcommunications@la.gov.



Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Teacher/Principal, New Teacher of the Year + Early Childhood Teacher/Leader of the Year Programs
- Meet our Partners
- Benefits of Participation and Examples of Excellence
- Public Interest Fellowship
- Gala
- State-level Application Materials and Timeline
- Local and State-level Processes
- Informational Calls and Next Steps
- Online Portals
- Resources and Questions



Teacher/Principal, New Teacher + Early Childhood Teacher/Leader of the Year Programs



Louisiana's Teacher/Principal, New Teacher + Early Childhood Teacher/Leader 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 [Dream Teachers](#) and the [Louisiana Association of Principals](#), honors the state's most exceptional educators through the Teacher/Principal, New Teacher, + Early Childhood Teacher/Leader of the Year programs.
- These award programs provide an opportunity to acknowledge those educators who are making exceptional gains with students.
- Please join us in celebrating exemplary educators in your school system.



Meet Our Partners



Dream Teachers

- Visit the [Dream Teachers website](https://www.dreamteachers.org) to learn more.
- For questions, email theresa@dreamteachers.org.

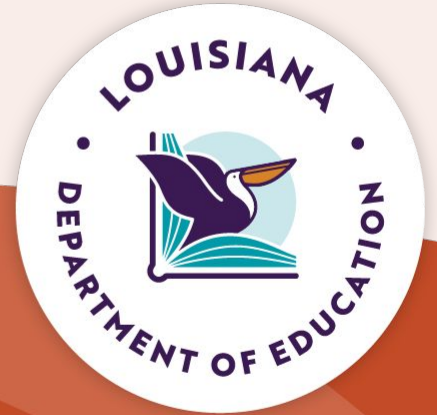


Louisiana Association of Principals (LAP)

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



Benefits of Participation



Benefits to Schools/School Systems/Communities

- Provides schools and school systems with the opportunity to:
 - **Celebrate, honor and reward** outstanding education stakeholders for their hard work, dedication and success.
 - Call **state-wide attention** to the **exceptional work** taking place in their **school/school system/community**.
 - **Shine the light** on the **innovative work** and **leadership** of educators.
 - **Recruit and retain** your best educators.



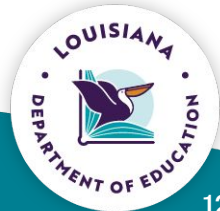
Benefits to Candidates

- Provides the educator 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.



2026 Louisiana Public Interest Fellowship

- Launched in 2018, the fellowship allows recipients to spend the upcoming school year advocating for a key education initiative of their choosing.
- 2026 Louisiana Public Interest Fellowship recipient(s) will be chosen from the previous year's list of Teacher of the Year semifinalists and finalists.
- The fellowship is supported by a \$50,000 state stipend that is utilized to offset the costs incurred while conducting the work of the fellowship.
- [Learn more about the fellowship.](#)

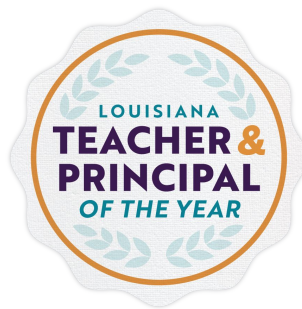


20th Annual Cecil J. Picard Educator Excellence Awards Gala

- 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 also be named.
- The Educator Excellence Awards Gala is Louisiana's most prestigious educational awards celebration of the year.
- Select your best candidates to be considered for this opportunity.



Honorees at the Gala



Meet the Current Overall State-Level Honorees



**2026 OVERALL
TEACHER OF THE YEAR**

*Regena
Hartley Beard*

**COPPER MILL ELEMENTARY
ZACHARY COMMUNITY
SCHOOL DISTRICT**



Meet the Overall State Teacher of the Year

2026 OVERALL PRINCIPAL OF THE YEAR

Justin Wax

DENHAM SPRINGS
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
LIVINGSTON PARISH



Meet the Overall State Principal of the Year



2026 OVERALL NEW TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Olivia Francois

DUTCHTOWN HIGH SCHOOL
ASCENSION PARISH



Meet the Overall New Teacher of the Year

**2026 EARLY CHILDHOOD
TEACHER OF THE YEAR**

*Brooklynn
Johnson-Botley*

KINDER HEAD START
ALLEN PARISH



Meet the Overall Early Childhood Teacher of the Year

**2026 EARLY CHILDHOOD
LEADER OF THE YEAR**

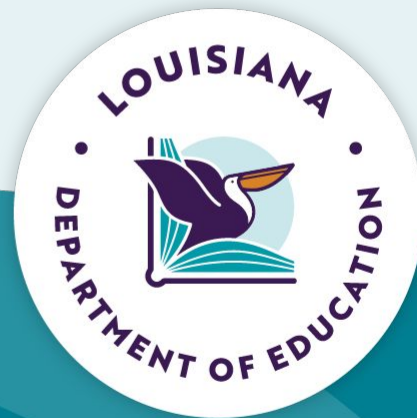
*Devonda
Whittington-Warren*

EXPLORE AND LEARN
EARLY LEARNING CENTER
TANGIPAHOA PARISH



Meet the Overall Early Childhood Leader of the Year

Timeline



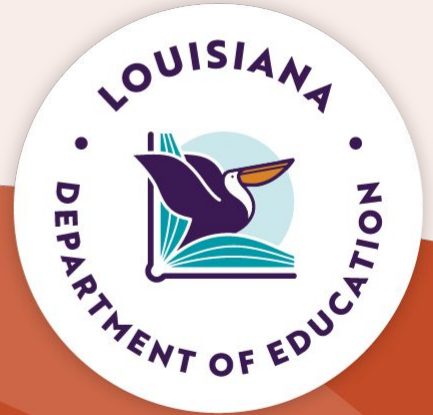
Timeline

Nominations Portal	September 2 - September 30, 2025	Stakeholders nominate teachers/principals (optional/nominations shared with school systems for their consideration)
Applications Process	October 2025 - January 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> October 1, 2025-applications released January 14, 2026-TPOY and EC TLOY applications due in the online portal January 21, 2026-New TOY applications due
Semifinalists TPOY/Finalists New TOY and EC TLOY Announced	March 17, 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher/Principal of the Year-48 semifinalists (24 teachers and 24 principals) New Teacher of the Year-9 finalists Early Childhood Teacher/Leader-10 finalists (5 teachers and 5 leaders)
Finalists TPOY Announced	May TBD, 2026	18 honorees (9 teachers and 9 principals)
Teacher Leader Summit	May 26-28, 2026	All TPOY semifinalists/finalists, EC TLOY finalists, and New TOY finalists will receive VIP tickets to the Teacher Leader Summit.
TPOY/NTOTY Interviews	June TBD, 2026	Finalist interviews
Gala	July 25, 2026 (tentative)	Celebrate all state-level honorees

- [Teacher/Principal of the Year](#)
- [Early Childhood Teacher/Leader of the Year](#)
- [New Teacher of the Year](#)



Application Process and Materials

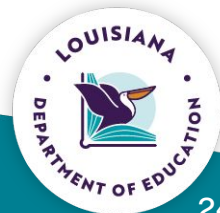


Teacher/Principal of the Year Criteria + Rubric

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 [bio](#) (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 student in videos/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)
 - **Please 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 student in videos/photos/etc.)
 - Responses to two written reflection questions and one video prompt
- Click link to view the [Teacher of the Year Application](#).



Teacher/Principal of the Year Certification

- In the application portal, candidates are asked to upload their teaching/educational leadership certificate.
- Certificates may be accessed on the [Louisiana Educator Portal](#) website.
- 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](#).



New Teacher of the Year Application

- The New Teacher of the Year application consists of the following components:
 - Basic information, including a bio and social media quote
 - Résumé (limit: two pages)
 - 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 student in videos/photos/etc.)
 - Responses to two written reflection questions and one video prompt
- Click link to view the [New Teacher of the Year Application](#).



Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year Application

- The Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year application consists of the following components:
 - Basic information, including a bio and social media quote
 - Résumé (limit: two pages)
 - Link to teaching video (YouTube link)
 - Lesson plan which corresponds to teaching video
 - Up to three letters of recommendation
 - Candidate consent form (teacher waiver)
 - Child and Family consent form (one for each student in videos/photos/etc.)
 - Responses to three written reflection questions
- Click link to view the [Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year Application](#).



Teacher/New Teacher/Early Childhood 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.
 1. Description of the lesson + passion statement (three minutes or less)
 2. Classroom lesson (ten minutes or less)
 3. Debrief of lesson (three minutes or less)
- In the state-level online application, videos must be submitted as a YouTube video link.



Video Continued

- The state review team will be looking for evidence of the following:
 - Effective classroom management
 - High student/child engagement and innovative techniques that reach all students/children regardless of teaching platform
 - Utilization of high quality curricula and resources
 - Checking for understanding
- Click link to view the [Teacher Video Filming Guide](#).



Candidate and Student Consent Forms

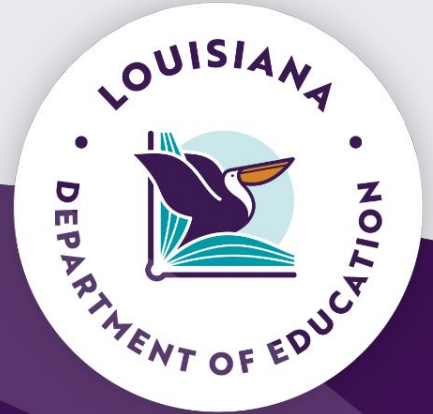
- Teachers and principals must sign and submit the Department's Candidate Consent Forms in the state-level online application portal.
- Students featured in the state-level application, whether in video, film, audio, photography, recording, etc., must have their guardian sign and return the Department's Student Consent Form.
- If possible, the candidate (teacher or principal) should scan all Student Consent Forms into one PDF and submit that one document in the state-level online application portal. An alternative will be available for those who don't have access to a scanner.

Click the link to view the [Candidate Consent Form](#).

Click the link to view the [Student Consent Form](#).



School System-Level Process



Teacher/Principal + New Teacher School System-Level Process

- All school systems are encouraged to select up to three overall Teacher/Principal + New Teacher of the Year honorees, one per division (elementary, middle, and high), to send to the state-process.
- All school systems are encouraged to submit at least one teacher and one principal 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 System-Level Process Continued

- School systems determine:
 - The grades in the division levels. At the state-level, candidates serving multiple grade levels, such as a principal of a K-12 school, may select the multi-division option.
 - Who they include in their process, such as librarians, etc.
- Compass/LEADS/LES data (as available) is considered in the state-level competition for Teacher and Principal of the Year.
- School systems should ensure state-level candidates are demonstrating success with students.



Early Childhood Application Process

- All **nominated** candidates are **invited to submit applications**.
- Candidates that were **not nominated may also submit an application**.
- Candidates may reach out to friends, family, Community Network Lead Agency and Child Care Resource and Referral Agency staff for support in completing a high-quality application. In addition, candidates have to be approved by the "operating authority" to be named as the state-level honorees.
- Individual candidates are responsible for submitting their own application by or before the deadline of January 14, 2026.



Informational Calls for Candidates and Stakeholders



Candidate and Stakeholder Calls

- At key phases throughout the process, informational/help desk calls will be held for coordinators, candidates and stakeholders.
 - Informational Calls - These calls will include information about the Teacher/Principal, New Teacher and + Early Childhood Teacher/Leader of the Year application process, timeline, etc.
 - Help Desk Calls - These calls will focus on online application portal support.
- Information about these calls will be shared with the school system coordinators, as well as posted in various Department communications, such as in the LDOE Weekly Newsletter.



Candidate and Stakeholder Calls

- [Zoom Details for Candidates and Stakeholders](#)
 - Candidates and stakeholders are encouraged to join these calls to stay informed on the Teacher/Principal, New Teacher, and Early Childhood Teacher/Leader of the Year processes.



Next Steps



Next Steps for Coordinators

- Review the applications and materials in the resources found on the [Staff and Educator Awards](#) page.
- Move forward in selecting your system-level honorees and submit those candidates to the state-level process.
- FYI- All candidates that are submitted to the state-level process are up for consideration as an overall state-level honoree. Systems should ensure the candidates selected/submitted have been properly vetted and approved by the school system.

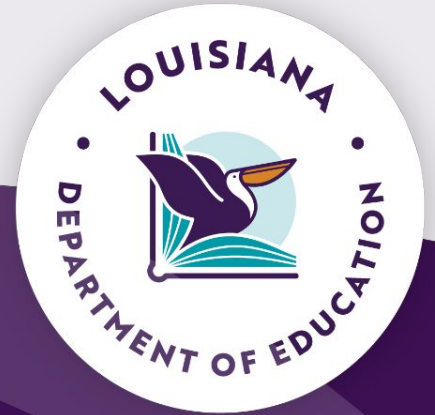


Next Steps for Candidates

- Review the applications and materials in the resources found on the [Staff and Educator Awards](#) page.
- Candidates should prepare all application materials and save to their electronic files for future use and submission.
 - State-level candidates should join informational and help desk calls to get guidance for creating a strong state-level application.
- When the online portals open, state-level candidates should submit their application in the online portal.

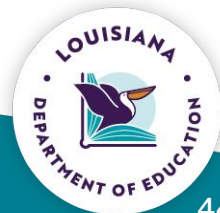


Online Portals

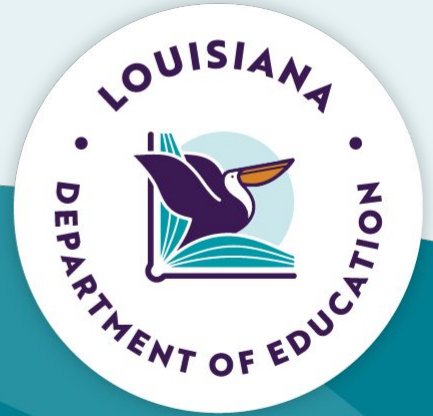


Teacher/Principal and New Teacher of the Year Online Portals

- Program coordinators will be notified when the online portals open.
- The portals will open in late fall. Once open, the portal links will be included on the [Staff and Educator Awards](#) page.
- Each school system will be asked to verify the names of their state-level candidates.
- State-level candidates will add their application materials to the online portals by
 - Teacher/Principal of the Year-January 14, 2026
 - Early Childhood Teacher/Leader applications are also due on January 14, 2026.
 - New Teacher of the Year-January 21, 2026



Resources



Resources

- Application materials, timelines, and information about the Teacher/Principal, New Teacher, + Early Childhood Teacher/Leader of the Year programs may be found on the [Staff and Educator Awards](#) page.
- See also the next slides which contains hyperlinks to all application materials.



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](#)
- [Candidate Recommendation Form](#) (Optional)
- [Professional Bio Guidelines](#)
- [Rubric-Teacher and Principal of the Year](#)
- [Teaching Video Guide-Teacher of the Year](#)
- [Timeline-Teacher and Principal of the Year](#)



New Teacher of the Year Materials

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

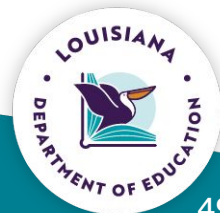
- [Application-New Teacher of the Year](#)
- [Application Sample-New Teacher of the Year](#)
- [Consent Form-Candidate](#)
- [Consent Form-Student](#)
- [Rubric-New Teacher of the Year](#)
- [Teaching Video Guide-New Teacher of the Year](#)
- [Timeline-New Teacher of the Year](#)



Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year Materials

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

- [Application- Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year](#)
- [Application Guidance- Early Childhood Teacher and Leader of the Year](#)
- [Consent Form- Candidate](#)
- [Consent Form- Student](#)



Questions

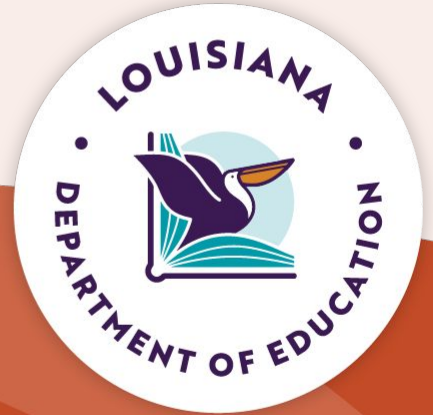


Questions- Teacher/Principal, New Teacher, Early Childhood Teacher/Leader

- Teacher/Principal of the Year: excellenteducators@la.gov
- New Teacher of the Year: laurie.carlton@la.gov
- Early Childhood Teacher/Leader of the Year: shallan.jones@la.gov



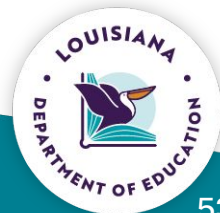
Additional Awards Opportunities



School Support, Health Staff, and Physical Activity

Below are other award programs for school support staff and schools:

- Outstanding School Support Employee of the Year
 - Clerical or custodial personnel, food service workers, maintenance staff, paraprofessionals, school bus drivers, teacher aides, or any other employee who is not required to hold a teacher's certificate as a condition of employment
- School Health Provider of the Year
 - Occupational therapists, physical therapists, speech-language pathologists, audiologists, nurses, nurse practitioners, licensed practical nurses, and licensed behavioral health providers (LCSW/LMSW, LPC, and psychologists)
- School Physical Activity Award
 - Outstanding school physical activity program throughout the day that includes: physical education classes, physical activity before and after school, physical activity during school hours, family and community engagement activities, and staff involvement



School Support, Health Staff, and Physical Activity

- Information and Assistance for Stakeholders
 - Informational Deck- [School Support, Health Staff, and Physical Activity Awards Process Informational Overview](#)
 - Please join these calls- [Informational Webinars for Stakeholders](#)
- Questions:
 - Outstanding School Support Employee of the Year- excellenteducators@la.gov
 - School Health Service Provider of the Year and School Physical Activity Award- healthyschools@la.gov



Thank You For Your Participation

