

# 2022 Awards for Teaching Excellence Guidelines

Applications due to Education Minnesota January 29, 2021

- Purpose** The NEA Foundation Awards for Teaching Excellence recognize, reward, and promote both excellence in teaching and advocacy for the profession. The NEA Foundation and the NEA present the awards jointly.
- Eligibility** All current members of a NEA local affiliate or bargaining units are eligible, including teachers, education support professionals, and higher education faculty and staff. NEA state affiliates, the Federal Education Association, and direct affiliates may each submit one nomination per year. Only nominations submitted and endorsed by one of these affiliates will be considered.
- Additionally, the NEA Foundation (NEAF) – like NEA – does not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations. NEAF encourages NEA state leaders to consider awardees who reflect the diversity among NEA members.
- Benefits** All affiliate awardees receive expenses-paid travel to Washington, DC for the NEA Foundation’s Salute to Excellence in Education Gala in February. Five awardees are selected for the Horace Mann Awards for Teaching Excellence and receive \$10,000 each plus expenses-paid travel for themselves and a guest. The NEA Member Benefits Award for Teaching Excellence recipient, selected from the five, receives \$25,000 in cash and a commemorative gift.
- Submissions** All applicants must be submitted to Education Minnesota by January 29, 2021. Interviews will then be conducted virtually in early March to determine Education Minnesota representative to the NEA Foundation.
- Notification** Applicants will receive a confirmation of submission email from Jessica Schmidt, [jessica.schmidt@edmn.org](mailto:jessica.schmidt@edmn.org). After the application deadline, applications will be reviewed and top candidates will be contacted for interviews held in early March.
- Criteria** Applications for the national awards are judged according to five criteria. Panelists rate state awardees on each criterion using the point value indicated below.
- 1) **PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE:** The awardee demonstrates expertise, creativity, and innovation in his/her field. The awardee uses a variety of strategies to effectively address students' different learning styles and needs. The awardee is a leader at the local, state, and/or national level. **(15 points)**
  - 2) **ADVOCACY FOR THE PROFESSION:** The awardee is a current, active member of the local, state, and/or national education association, and has assumed leadership roles at one or more of these levels. The awardee is an active member of other professional organizations and engages in activities that advance the profession and public education. The awardee speaks out on behalf of public education, educators, and students. **(15 points)**

- 3) **ATTENTION TO DIVERSITY:** The awardee works to provide a learning environment that meets the needs of all students, regardless of differences. The awardee recognizes and explicitly addresses the full array of values, cultures, and experiences represented in our diverse modern society, through varied interactions with students. **(10 points)**
- 4) **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:** The awardee is intentional, engaging family and community resources to enhance student learning and student success. **(5 points)**
- 5) **LEADERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:** The awardee continually engages in experiences to improve his or her practice and to gain new skills and knowledge. The awardee shares this new learning with colleagues in effective ways. The awardee's participation in and commitment to professional development has a visible impact on his or her institution, students, and community. **(5 points)**

## Contents of Nomination

- A) **DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION:** Contact information for the state, federal, or direct affiliate and the awardee. **(One page maximum)**
- B) **RESUME:** The resume provides a brief, factual overview of the awardee's career, including positions held, degrees attained, honors received, etc. The resume may also describe personal achievements or activities that are not noted elsewhere. **(Two pages maximum)**
- C) **AWARDEE'S STATEMENT:** The awardee's statement must be written by the awardee, as a first-person narrative. The statement includes specific examples to illustrate all five of the award criteria. The questions below do not need to be copied verbatim in the ext. However, state awardees are strongly encouraged to include headings or keywords related to the criteria to aid the panelists in their reading. **(3400 words maximum)**
  - 1) How have you grown as an educator throughout your career? Cite several examples of ways you have adapted your practice over time. What strategies or methods do you use to support student learning and student success? How do you act as a leader?
  - 2) How has your involvement in the National Education Association or NEA affiliate (Education Minnesota) contributed to your success as an educator? How would you persuade a new colleague to join or become more active in the association? In what other ways do you serve as an advocate for the profession and for public education?
  - 3) Please describe how you have been intentional, engaging family and community resources to enhance student learning and student success. How do you build relationships with parents and community members?

- 4) What experience or activities have been most beneficial to your professional knowledge, skills, and practice? How have you contributed to the professional development of your colleagues? How has your professional growth made a difference for your school or university, your students, and your community? Include examples.
  - 5) How do you address issues of diversity in your interactions with students? What is the result of such efforts? How does your approach to diversity affect your work?
  - 6) If you have not already done so, tell a story about how your work has made a difference for a student or a group of students.
  - 7) What advice would you give to someone entering the profession on how to attain excellence?
- D) ENDORSEMENT LETTERS: Letters of endorsement are written by the awardee's local affiliate president, colleagues, current or former students, parents, or community members. Letters should be signed, if possible, and the salutation should address the state affiliate selection committee or the national selection panel for The NEA Foundation Awards for Teaching Excellence. **(Up to three letters, two pages maximum each, double-spaced preferred. Letters must be submitted with all other materials)**

### Submission

Please submit the application materials on Education Minnesota's website at <https://www.educationminnesota.org/news/awards/nea-foundation-awards>, via email to [jessica.schmidt@edmn.org](mailto:jessica.schmidt@edmn.org) or via mail to:

Education Minnesota  
Attn: Jessica Schmidt  
41 Sherburne Avenue  
St. Paul, MN 55103

### Checklist

- |                                    |                             |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1) Demographic Data Sheet          | <b>(1 – 2 pages)</b>        |
| 2) Resume                          | <b>(2 pages maximum)</b>    |
| 3) Awardee's Statement             | <b>(3400 words maximum)</b> |
| 4) Letters of Endorsement          | <b>(6 pages maximum)</b>    |
| 5) Digital photo <i>(optional)</i> |                             |