

2019 Herb Kohl Educational Foundation Kohl Teacher Fellowship Application Guidelines (Public School Applicants)

Purpose

The purpose of the Herb Kohl Teacher Fellowship program is to recognize and support teaching excellence and innovation. The Herb Kohl Educational Foundation's goal is to support Wisconsin teachers in pursuit of their unrealized goals for their classrooms or professional development. The 100 Kohl Fellowship teacher recipients and the 100 schools of those teachers will each receive \$6,000 grants from the Kohl Teacher Fellowship program and will be recognized at a spring banquet.

Nomination Process and Eligibility

To be eligible to compete for a Fellowship, teachers must be nominated by students, parents, other teachers, community members, or administrators. Because the program's purpose is to recognize the contributions of Wisconsin's classroom teachers, **staff members whose assignments are administrative or supervisory are not eligible**. All PK-12 classroom teachers **who plan to continue teaching in their current capacity for a minimum of 50% full-time equivalency during the 2019-2020 school year** are eligible. Pre-school teachers must teach in a Pre-K program that is affiliated with an elementary school. **Previous Kohl Fellowship recipients are ineligible**.

There are no limitations as to the number of applicants who can be considered from any one Wisconsin school district.

The SmartSimple nomination portal can be accessed on the web here: <https://hkf.smartsimple.com>

Teachers must be working in a public school district, and must choose to identify themselves as an elementary school teacher, middle school teacher, high school teacher, or special services teacher. Applicants may choose to identify themselves in whatever category they choose, but they may only choose one.

A note on special services teachers

Special services teachers are those who serve in a PK-12 capacity other than that of a classroom teacher. Like teachers, they must have **daily face-to-face contact with students**. Teachers employed as virtual school teachers associated with a school district are also eligible for nomination. Special services roles can include, but are not limited to: special education, gifted and talented (or other exceptional needs), instructional resource or interventionist, speech language pathologist, school counseling, school psychologist, school nurse, school social worker, or instructional media personnel. Special education teachers may choose to apply as a special services teacher, or may apply within their appropriate grade band category.

Nomination forms must be submitted online **on or before Monday, October 8, 2018**.

Application Process

Nominees will be sent password-protected access to a Kohl Teacher Fellowship Application **not later than October 11, 2018**. In order to provide all nominees an equal opportunity, they must follow all instructions in the application form. **All applications must be submitted using the SmartSimple application process. Paper applications are not accepted.**

Advice about registering for a Fellowship

When setting up a personal profile, be sure to scroll all the way to the bottom of the page and select a school type. For public school teachers, it will be “Public School”. Questions in the application are specific to an applicant’s context. Then, validate your personal profile and save your personal profile information.

Applicants for the Kohl Fellowship will be evaluated on the following:

1. Personal educational philosophy;
2. How they work to raise achievement for all students;
3. How they inspire students’ love of learning and engage parents
4. Innovative projects/programs;
5. Unrealized goals for their classroom or professional development;
6. Positive aspects they see in education and changes they would like to see made; and
7. Commitment to their community, including service, citizenship and civic engagement.

Because this is a statewide award, application evaluators may not be fully familiar with a teacher’s school, district, community or geographic area that a student is from, so applicants are encouraged to include information about his or her personal and school context so that a reader can understand the significance of his or her achievements.

Each candidate must also **submit three letters of recommendation**; one must come from someone outside the immediate school community who is not currently employed by the school district or a board member. Letters may come from former students, parents, community members, colleagues in a professional association not directly linked to the nominee’s school or district, or university or college professors. Letters should enhance the nominee’s application by illustrating **specific examples of the teacher’s skills and contributions, knowledge, or attributes emphasized in the application materials**.

The request to submit a letter of recommendation is not sent electronically to a recommender until **after** an applicant has completed his or her application and submitted the application (clicked the “Submit” button.) At that point, the requests for letters of recommendation are sent to the people who the applicant has identified as a recommender.

A submitted application is not considered complete until all three letters of recommendation have been submitted by the recommenders. An incomplete application will not be considered for an award.

Advice about letters of recommendation

It is advisable to allow 2-3 weeks for requests to be completed by the writers of the letters of recommendation. It is also advisable for an applicant to personally notify the letter writers before an applicant submits his or her application, and make sure that the request won't be blocked by their email, sent to the wrong email address, or sent to the junk mail box. It's also smart for an applicant to alert letter writers when the application has been submitted, so that the writers have the best chance of seeing the request and completing the letter. Applicants will receive email notifications when a letter has been submitted by a recommender, but will not have the ability to see the contents of the letter. **Remember, a submitted application is not considered complete until all three letters of recommendation have been submitted by the recommenders.** Plan ahead and allow sufficient time for recommenders to submit letters.

Letter of Recommendation Translations

Letters of recommendation will be read in the language in which they are written. However, an applicant may request to submit a version of that letter translated into English, or request a translation of a letter, by contacting Mark Mueller at the Department of Public Instruction at mark.mueller@dpi.wi.gov. Translations will be added as additional pages to the application, rather than replacing a letter in a different language, to both honor the intentional writing and word choices of the author, and allow for evaluators who may be familiar with the language to read the letter in its natural language.

New in 2019: Wisconsin's First Nations and indigenous people selection region

Applicants may choose to identify themselves as a member of one of Wisconsin's First Nations or as an indigenous person living in Wisconsin for consideration within the Wisconsin's First Nations Region. The applicant must upload information that supports their tribal affiliation or eligibility for tribal membership to be included in this region. Applicants with this identification will be screened by members of the Wisconsin's First Nations rather than through their geographic CESA region. Applicants whose packets are selected by the Wisconsin's First Nations and indigenous people region will proceed on to the Statewide Selection Committee for consideration.

Application Due Date

Applications must be submitted and complete (includes all 3 letters of recommendation) using the SmartSimple web portal **not later than Sunday, November 4, 2018 at 11:59.59 p.m.** **Again, a submitted application is not considered complete until all three letters of recommendation have been submitted by the recommenders. Late applications are not accepted, and the failure of a recommender to submit a letter of recommendation by the deadline does not constitute grounds for an extension.**

Selection Process

Applications will be sorted by the region in which the applicant works, and will first be evaluated at a Regional Selection Committee meeting. The Regional Selection processes are coordinated in one of 14 different regions: each of the state's 12 Cooperative Educational Service Agencies (CESAs), Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS), or by the Wisconsin's First Nations region beginning **Monday, November 12, 2018**. Each Region is allocated a different number of applications that can be forwarded on to the Statewide Selection Committee level. Applicants whose packets are not forwarded on to the Statewide Selection Committee will be notified by the end of December.

The scoring rubric can be accessed online, from the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation website at: <http://www.kohleducation.org/> Public school award application scoring rubrics can also be found on the DPI website at: <https://dpi.wi.gov/teacher-year/program/selection-process/kohl-foundation>

Successful applicants' materials will be forwarded from a Region to the Statewide Selection Committee. Representatives of the Kohl Educational Foundation, CESAs and MPS, Wisconsin's indigenous people, the Wisconsin Council of Religious and Independent Schools, the Wisconsin Newspaper Association, business-education partners and state education-related associations and agencies serve annually on the Statewide Selection Committee.

The Statewide Selection Committee meets early in 2019 to review applications and make final selections. Applicants who are awarded a Herb Kohl Educational Foundation Teacher Fellowship will be notified through traditional mail in March. Non-recipients will also be notified at the same time, also through traditional mail.

Recipients are then invited to attend one of the five Herb Kohl Educational Foundation Banquets, held throughout the spring at five different areas of the state, to be honored and receive certificates representing their award.

Wisconsin and National Teacher of the Year Programs

Public school recipients of Kohl Teacher Fellowships automatically become candidates for the Wisconsin Teacher of the Year (TOY) program. A State Teacher of the Year Selection Committee selects four Wisconsin Teachers of the Year using their Kohl Fellowship applications, one for each of the four categories: elementary, middle/junior high school, high school, and special services. The four selected teachers are interviewed in Madison to determine Wisconsin's nominee to the National Teacher of the Year Program.

Important Dates and Reminders

- 2019 award nomination window closes on **Monday, October 8, 2018** at 11:59.59 p.m.
- 2019 award applications must be submitted in SmartSimple by **Sunday, November 4, 2018** at 11:59.59 p.m.
- **A submitted application is not considered complete until all three letters of recommendation have been submitted by the recommenders. Please plan ahead!**
- All applicants will be notified of their status of proceeding to the Statewide Selection Committee or not progressing beyond the Regional Selection Committee in **December**.
- Recipients will be notified in early **March**.

For more information or questions about the application process for public school teachers, please visit the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation website (<http://www.kohleducation.org/>) or contact:

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