



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL

September 8, 2023, 10:30 p.m. ET

Second Annual Red Carpet Event Celebrates Indiana's Top Schools and Educators

Nearly \$5 Million in Grants Awarded at Indiana Educational Excellence Awards Gala

INDIANAPOLIS – During the second annual Indiana Educational Excellence Awards Gala, the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) awarded nearly \$5 million to schools and educators across the state. This black-tie event is focused on celebrating and elevating the work of Indiana's educators as they support student learning.

"The heart of the Educational Excellence Awards Gala is focused on the impact of our educators and schools. We know that we have continuous improvements to make for our students...and we also know that we have shining examples of success existing across our state," said Dr. Katie Jenner, Indiana Secretary of Education. "Our goal was to host a red carpet event to celebrate our very best educators, on a level similar to how we celebrate movie stars and professional athletes, because their incredible impact deserves to be celebrated at the grandest level we can. Many of the educators tonight have positively impacted hundreds of students over the years and are leaders in their local communities. So, bringing them together for an awards night to roll out the red carpet and provide surprise monetary awards is one small way we can spotlight the massive impact they continue to make on our state."

The gala, which was hosted in Indianapolis on Friday, September 8, brought together over 500 educators and guests from across the state. The event recognized the 2023 Indiana Teacher of the Year, Indiana's 2022 Milken Educator Award recipients and other dedicated educators from across the state. This event also recognized schools that are excelling in key areas such as literacy (science of reading), STEM and rethinking high school.

The largest award of the evening, *Excellence in Next Level Educational Experiences and Opportunities*, recognizes the school or district making significant strides in preparing students for their future, which includes focusing on literacy, STEM and college and career readiness. The three finalists for this award each received \$250,000, and the winner received an additional \$250,000.

IDOE also awarded districts with up to \$250,000 for excellence in areas including early literacy, STEM, student pathways, college readiness, community collaboration and educator professional development. The size of each financial award is proportional to the respective school or district's total student population. Awards must be used to sustain and expand the school's current, impactful programming, to support teachers who lead this work, as well as to mentor other schools to drive additional, innovative strategies through a community of practice.

Additionally, 16 outstanding educators were awarded with \$2,500 each for their commitment to areas such as professional growth, use of technology in the classroom and cultivating community partnerships.

2023 Indiana Educational Excellence Awards Gala school/district awardees include:

Excellence in STEM Award

Guilford Elementary School, Plainfield Schools \$126,775

Area 31 Career Center, Wayne Township Schools \$250,000

Beveridge Elementary School, Gary Community Schools \$85,250

This award recognizes individual schools that have expanded access to high-quality STEM learning opportunities for all students.

Excellence in Leading and Learning Award

Bluffton-Harrison MSD \$250,000

Cedar Crest Intermediate, Southeast Dubois County School Corporation \$50,600

Northview Middle School, MSD Washington Township \$215,600

This award recognizes individual schools that provide high-quality professional learning support for educators.

Excellence in Early Literacy Award

Forest Glen Elementary, MSD Lawrence Township \$242,000

Northeast Dubois Elementary, Northeast Dubois School Corporation \$64,625

Western Primary, Western School Corporation \$158,400

This award recognizes individual schools that have established strategies and partnerships to support all students in the mastery of foundational reading skills, specifically.

Excellence in Student Pathways

Perry Central Junior-Senior High, Perry Central Community Schools \$160,050

Victory College Prep \$248,050

McKenzie Center for Innovation & Technology, MSD Lawrence Township \$250,000

This award recognizes individual schools that prioritize access to opportunities for work-based learning and apprenticeships.

Excellence in Community Collaboration

White River Valley High School, White River Valley School District \$57,750

East Allen University High School, East Allen County Schools \$83,050

Amp Lab at Electric Works, Fort Wayne Community Schools \$107,250

This award recognizes individual schools that are maximizing support for students through strategic collaboration with local and state partners.

Excellence in Academic Gains

Chamberlain Elementary, Goshen Community Schools \$71,775

Ladoga Elementary School, Southmont Schools \$44,825

Selma Elementary School, Liberty-Perry Community Schools \$144,375

This award recognizes individual schools that have made the most progress in improving achievement for all students. One or more of the following must be demonstrated by the award recipients: increased academic achievement for students as indicated by ILEARN English/language arts/Mathematics assessment results, prioritization of initiatives focused on accelerating learning and implementation of progress monitoring and evidenced-based practices for students in need of extra support.

Excellence in College Readiness

Penn High School, Penn-Harris-Madison Schools \$250,000

Columbus North High School, Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation \$250,000

21st Century Charter School \$250,000

Signature School \$108,075

This award recognizes individual schools that have demonstrated a commitment to helping students earn a credential of value before graduating high school.

Excellence in Next Level Educational Experiences and Opportunities

Linton-Stockton School Corporation \$250,000

Purdue Polytechnic High School \$250,000

Batesville High School \$250,000

This award recognizes individual schools or districts that are transformative in their holistic approach to prepare students for their future, including a focus on literacy, STEM and college and career readiness.

2023 Indiana Educational Excellence Awards Gala individual awardees include:

Promising Educator Excellence Award

Emily Dobson, First through Third Grade, South Bend Community School Corporation

Brandon Porter, Fine Arts Magnet Resource, Fort Wayne Community Schools

This award recognizes individual educators with one to five years of experience who proactively engage in professional development and seek out opportunities to learn from other educators.

Dedicated Educator Excellence Award

Ben Neilson, Eighth Grade U.S. History, Mill Creek Community School Corporation

Briana Temple, Instructional Coach, Indianapolis Public Schools

This award recognizes individual educators with six to 15 years of experience who proactively engage in professional development and seek out opportunities to mentor and learn from other educators.

Lifetime Educator Excellence Award

Alan Burrell, Sixth Grade Science, Franklin Township Community School Corporation

Kristy Stephens, Eighth Grade English/Language Arts, MSD Boone Township

This award recognizes individual educators with 16+ years of experience who demonstrate a commitment to their own professional growth, as well as contributing to the professional development of other educators.

Early Childhood Educator Excellence Award

Mindy Sendelweck, Pre-K, Greater Jasper Consolidated Schools

Erin Day, Pre-K Special Education, Greenfield Central School Corporation

This award recognizes individual early childhood educators with over three years of experience who demonstrate a commitment to supporting Indiana's youngest students in developing kindergarten readiness skills.

Digital Innovator Excellence Award

Matthew Rodney, History, Purdue Polytechnic High School

Allison Waitt, Business, Sheridan Community Schools

This award recognizes individual educators who leverage technology to improve student learning. This individual takes the initiative to learn how to use digital tools in the classroom and may support others in their implementation of technologies in the classroom.

English Learner Educator Excellence Award

Rebecca Schroeder, English as a New Language, Hamilton Southeastern Schools

Kathryn Watts, English as a New Language, MSD Pike Township

This award recognizes individual educators with over three years of experience who serve students within their school's English Learning Program. This individual leads, teaches and builds community among all educators to ensure students are supported across settings.

Exceptional Learner Educator Excellence Award

Kalvin Miller, Special Education, Frankton-Lapel Community Schools

Amy Hallam, Special Education, MSD of North Posey County

This award recognizes individual educators with over three years of experience who serve students within their school's Exceptional Learner Program. This individual leads, teaches and builds community among all educators to ensure students are supported across settings.

Collaborative Educator Excellence Award

Daniel Walsh, STEM, Elkhart Community Schools

Meaghan Krukemeier, Director of Counseling, Center Grove Community Schools

This award recognizes individual educators with over three years of experience who maximize support for students through strategic collaboration with various partners. This individual engages in identifying needs and expanding students' access to future opportunities through the implementation of relevant partnerships.

Presenting sponsors for the event include the Institute for Quality Education, EdChoice and The Mind Trust. The event received additional financial support through premier sponsorships from the Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation, Equitable Education Solutions and Ivy Tech Community College, as well as signature sponsorships from the Indiana Association of School Principals, the University of Indianapolis' Center for Excellence in Leadership of Learning and Marian University. Other contributors include: Ascend, the Indiana Association of Public School Superintendents, Glick Philanthropies, Five Star Technology Solutions, Stand for Children Indiana and CSO Architects.

School awards are funded through the state's federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief grant. Individual educator awards are funded through the generous sponsorship of those listed above.

Photos from the Indiana Educational Excellence Awards Gala will be available [here](#). Additional photos, including group photos of award recipients, are available upon request.

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