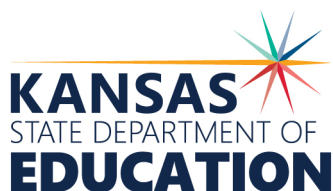


Kansas Horizon Award Program

2027 NOMINATION FORM

Postmarked by October 9, 2026



Kansas leads the world in the success of each student.

KANSAS HORIZON AWARD PROGRAM 2027 NOMINATION PACKAGE

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KANSAS HORIZON AWARD PROGRAM 2027 NOMINATION PACKAGE

Mission, Nominations, General Qualifications, Selection Process, Recognition and Awards, Professional Development Activity and Timeline

Mission

The Kansas Horizon Award Program, sponsored by the Kansas State Department of Education, identifies, and recognizes representatives of excellent teaching in the elementary and secondary classrooms of the state. The mission of the program is . . .

To recognize exemplary first-year teachers who perform in a way that distinguishes them as outstanding.

Nominations

Each school district may nominate **one elementary classroom teacher and/or one secondary classroom teacher** for the Kansas Horizon Award Program.

All teachers should have an equal opportunity to be nominated for and selected as the district nominee. The local nomination and selection process should not be biased nor give the appearance of bias. You may consider getting input from parents, veteran teachers, etc. in making your selection. School principals and superintendents are encouraged to plan recognition ceremonies honoring the exemplary teachers.

Nominations should be made without regard to age, sex, race, or religion.

Please submit six sets – the original and five copies – of the completed nomination package. All nominations for the 2027 Kansas Horizon Award Program must be postmarked by **Oct. 9, 2026**, to the following address:

Kansas Horizon Award Program
Communications and Recognition Programs
Landon State Office Building
900 SW Jackson Street, Suite 102
Topeka, KS 66612

Nominations postmarked after October 9 will not be accepted – no exceptions.

General Qualifications

The Horizon Award nomination is available to any novice teacher meeting all other requirements on any license type with the exceptions of emergency substitute and standard substitute licenses, which do not qualify. Teachers who are completing an alternative route and teaching under a pre-standard license (still in the process of completing the professional education or preservice program) are eligible to be nominated. Applications should be postmarked by October 9 of **the nominee's second year of teaching**, and recognition will occur in February of their second year.

Eligibility Criteria

- Nominee will have successfully completed his or her first year of teaching in a pre-kindergarten through grade 12 Kansas school accredited by the Kansas State Board of Education.
- Nominee will be a full-time classroom teacher.
- Nominee will be responsible for the assessment of students, assignment of grades, preparation of lesson plans, parent-teacher conferences, discipline, attendance, and other daily educational tasks.
- Nominee will have performed in a way that distinguishes him or her from other novice teachers.
- Nominee will be selected by the school district superintendent and building principal.

Selection Process

The Kansas Horizon Award Program is a regional competition. The regions correspond to the state's four U.S. congressional districts.

The Kansas State Department of Education will appoint regional selection committees responsible for reviewing the nomination forms and selecting up to four elementary classroom teachers and four secondary classroom teachers per region for a total of thirty-two teachers.

Recognition

The possible thirty-two teachers, four elementary classroom teachers and four secondary classroom teachers from each region, will be individually recognized during a luncheon at the Kansas Exemplary Educators Network (KEEN) conference in Topeka in Feb. 2027 (date TBD). Also, they will be invited to participate as special guests for the two-day KEEN conference. The conference will take place in Topeka in Feb. 2027 (dates TBD).

Timeline

DATE	ITEM
August 2026	Nomination forms are available on the KSDE website (https://www.ksde.gov)
October 9, 2026	Postmark date for submitting 2027 award nominations to the Kansas State Department of Education.
November 2026	Selection committee members will review and score nominations.
December 2026	The Kansas State Department of Education will tabulate the results and check references.
January 2027	Recipients and nominees will be notified.
February 2027 (date TBD)	Recipients recognized at KEEN conference.

Instructions for Completing the Kansas Horizon Award Program Nomination Form

- The nominee must meet the general qualifications for the Kansas Horizon Award Program as outlined in this nomination package.
- All information requested in the nomination form must be provided.
- Signatures of the nominee, the nominee's principal, and the nominee's district superintendent (chief school administrator) **MUST** be provided.
- Responses must be:
 - **Limited to the number of pages requested in each section.**
 - Type size must be **no smaller than 12 point.**
 - **Margins must be at least one inch** at the top, bottom, and sides.
- Section I (pages 1-2) must be submitted on the form provided.
- Section II, **the essay topic** (i.e., Instructional Skills, Interaction with Students, etc.) **must appear at the top of each page.**
- Section III, include **three letters of support** from any of the following: professors, cooperating teachers, administrators, colleagues, parents, or students.
- The nomination should be stapled in the upper left corner. **Do not include a cover page.**
- Submit original form and support documents along with five additional copies.
- In order to provide all nominees with an equal opportunity, applicants must adhere to all the instructions outlined in the packet.
- The nomination **must be postmarked by Oct 9, 2026**, to the following address.

Kansas Horizon Award Program
Communications and Recognition Programs
Landon State Office Building
900 SW Jackson Street, Suite 102
Topeka, KS 66612

KANSAS HORIZON AWARD PROGRAM

2027 Kansas Horizon Award Nomination Form

SECTION I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Nominee name: _____

Home address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip code: _____

USD #: _____ USD name: _____

School email address: _____

Home email address: _____

School Profile (check one): ☐ Urban ☐ Suburban ☒ Rural

Number of Students in Nominee's: _____

District : _____ Building: _____

Major Subject Area (if any): _____

Grade Level: _____

I hereby give my permission that any or all of the attached materials may be shared with persons interested in promoting the Kansas Horizon Award Program. I meet the general qualifications for the award program as outlined in the nomination package.

Signature of nominee

Date:

School/Building Principal

Name: _____ Title: _____

School name: _____

School address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip code: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

I acknowledge that the nominee meets the general qualifications for the Kansas Horizon Award as outlined in the nomination package and submit this nomination with my approval.

Signature of principal Date: _____

School District Superintendent

Name: _____ Title: _____

School district name and #: _____

District address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip code _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

I acknowledge that the nominee meets the general qualifications for the Kansas Horizon Award as outlined in the nomination package and submit this nomination with my approval.

Signature of superintendent Date: _____

SECTION II: ESSAY QUESTIONS

Essay topic (i.e., Instructional Skills, Interaction with Students, etc.) not the question, **must appear at the top of each page.**

Instructional Skills

Nominee's Performance in First Year of Teaching

The response to this question must be completed by the nominee. It must be no more than one typed page, double spaced and using no smaller than 12 pt. type. The essay topic **must** appear at the top of the page.

Question - What instructional strategies are you using in your classroom?

Please be specific. Describe how you use these strategies by giving examples and stating results that were achieved. Be sure the information provided is relevant to this section.

Interaction with Students

Nominee's Performance in First Year of Teaching

The response to this question may be completed by a school system administrator, professional colleague, parent, or student. It must be no more than one typed page, double spaced and using no smaller than 12 pt. type. The essay topic must appear at the top of the page. Please sign and give your title at the bottom of the page.

Question - As compared with other 1st year teachers you have known, please describe how this teacher motivates and inspires students.

Please be specific. Describe how the teacher met these standards by giving examples and stating results, where appropriate, that were achieved. Be sure the information provided is relevant to this section.

Effective Communication

Nominee's Performance in First Year of Teaching

The response to this question may be completed by a school system administrator, professional colleague, parent, or student. It must be no more than one typed page, double spaced and using no smaller than 12 pt. type. The essay topic **must** appear at the top of the page. **Please sign and give your title at the bottom of the page.**

Question - As compared with other 1st year teachers you have known, please describe how this teacher effectively communicates with parents.

Please be specific. Describe how the teacher met these standards by giving examples and stating results, where appropriate, that were achieved. Be sure the information provided is relevant to this section.

Building Administrator Recommendation

Nominee's Performance in First Year of Teaching

This page must be completed by a school system administrator. It must be no more than one typed page, double spaced and using no smaller than 12 pt. type. The essay topic must appear at the top of the page. Please sign and give your title at the bottom of the page.

Question - What is it that distinguishes your teacher as most outstanding?

Please be specific. Describe how the teacher met these standards by giving examples and stating results, where appropriate, that were achieved. Be sure the information provided is relevant to this section.

Nominee's Original Essay

Nominee's Performance in First Year of Teaching

This page must be completed by the nominee, and it must be no more than one typed page, double spaced and using no smaller than 12 pt. type. The essay topic must appear at the top of the page.

Question - After successfully completing your first year of teaching, what advice would you give a beginning teacher?

KANSAS HORIZON AWARD PROGRAM 2027 NOMINATION FORM

SECTION III: LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Include **three** letters of support from among the following:

- Professors
- Cooperating teachers
- Administrators
- Colleagues
- Parents
- Students.

The letters should be no more than one typed page, single spaced using no smaller than 12 pt. type.

Letters should be included in the completed packet. They should not be mailed separately.

Should you have questions regarding the nomination process or this form, please contact:

Kira Williams
Public Service Administrator
Communications and Recognition Programs
(785) 296-4950
kira.williams@ksde.gov



Kansas State Department of Education
900 S.W. Jackson Street, Suite 102
Topeka, Kansas 66612-1212
(785) 296-3201
www.ksde.gov

The Kansas State Board of Education does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs and activities and provides equal access to any group officially affiliated with the Boy Scouts of America and other designated youth groups. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: KSDE General Counsel, Office of General Counsel, KSDE, Landon State Office Building, 900 S.W. Jackson, Suite 102, Topeka, KS 66612, (785) 296-3201.