

**2021 AWARD FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE**  
**CRITERIA REQUIREMENTS OF APPLICATION**

Application packages must include all of the items listed below, in the specified order. Formatting instructions are noted for each part. **Applications that do not conform to these specifications will be disqualified.**

**A) DATA SHEET**

The data sheet requests contact information for the state, federal, or direct affiliate; the applicant; and the applicant's local affiliate.

**One page maximum. The form must be typed.**

**B) RESUME**

The resume provides a brief, factual overview of the applicant'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. The form must be typed.**

**C) APPLICANT'S STATEMENT**

The applicant's statement must be written by the applicant as a first-person narrative. The statement should include specific examples to illustrate all five of the award criteria. The questions below do not need to be copied verbatim in the text. However, applicants are strongly encouraged to include headings or keywords related to the criteria to aid the panelists in their reading.

**3400 words maximum. The form must be typed.**

- 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(s) 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 experiences 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) LETTERS OF ENDORSEMENT**

Letters of endorsement can be written by applicant’s local affiliate president, colleagues, current or former students, parents, or community members. Letters should be signed, and the salutation should address the state affiliate selection committee or the national panel for *The NEA Foundation Awards for Teaching Excellence*.

**Up to three letters, two pages maximum each, double-spacing preferred. Must be submitted with all other materials.**

**E) DIGITAL PHOTO**

Please email a JPEG photo (at least 72 pixels per inch and 400KB) of the applicant to Courtney Gillespie ([courtney.gillespie@ieanea.org](mailto:courtney.gillespie@ieanea.org)).

**Submission**

- 1) Do **not** staple or permanently bind the materials. Paper clips are acceptable.
- 2) Do **not** use covers or other decorative packaging.
- 3) Include **only** the materials requested in these guidelines.
- 4) Mail one complete application package **for receipt at the Illinois Education Association-NEA by January 15, 2020.**

Send your application package to:  
**Illinois Education Association-NEA**  
**Tom Tully, Secretary-Treasurer**  
**100 East Edwards Street**  
**Springfield, IL 62704-1999**

- 5) Email your digital JPEG Photo to [courtney.gillespie@ieanea.org](mailto:courtney.gillespie@ieanea.org)

**Questions?**

Call or e-mail Courtney Gillespie  
1-800-252-8076, ext. 2268 or [courtney.gillespie@ieanea.org](mailto:courtney.gillespie@ieanea.org)

**CHECKLIST**

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|---------------------------|--|
| 1) DATA SHEET             | 1-2 PAGES  |
| 2) RESUME                 | 2 PAGES MAXIMUM  |
| 3) APPLICANT’S STATEMENT  | 3400 WORDS MAXIMUM   |
| 4) LETTERS OF ENDORSEMENT | 6 PAGES MAXIMUM  |
| 5) DIGITAL PHOTO          | EMAILED TO <a href="mailto:courtney.gillespie@ieanea.org">COURTNEY GILLESPIE</a> |