

Civic Engagement Champions Awards

We are living in a time when civic education seems critical. A recent survey found that only one-third of Americans can name all branches of government, and one-third cannot name any at all; 37 percent of Americans cannot name any of the rights guaranteed in the first amendment.

To recognize this important work, the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) has created the Civic Engagement Champions Award (CEC) to honor the contributions of middle school educators who encourage their students to be active and responsible citizens.

With the support of the Frank Islam Institute for 21st Century Citizenship (FII), NASBE will highlight the work of four outstanding middle school teachers who are fostering civic engagement. Middle school teachers play a particularly strong role in boosting civic knowledge and engagement, helping students become active, responsible citizens. National recognition and \$5,000 awards will be made at NASBE's Annual Conference in October to teachers from four states, which represent regional membership areas:

- Illinois
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Washington

We plan to expand the program in future years and hope eventually to operate in all states and territories.

Who Supports This Program?

NASBE's partners include the following education organizations:

- American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
- AASA, the School Superintendents Association
- Association for Middle Level Education
- Council of Chief State School Officers
- National Association of Secondary School Principals
- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards
- National Council for the Social Studies

Who Can Apply?

To be recognized as a 2019 Civic Engagement Champion, teachers must teach young adolescents in grades 5 through 8.

The National Council for the Social Studies notes, "Active and responsible citizens are able to identify and analyze public problems, deliberate with other people about how to define and address

issues, take constructive action together, reflect on their actions, create and sustain groups, and influence institutions both large and small.”

The award will be open to middle school teachers in **all disciplines**. It is envisioned that teachers might be honored for projects like these:

- An environmental science teacher might be recognized for a classroom unit that involves students measuring pollution in a nearby streambed.
- An English teacher might be honored for a project that involves students in writing persuasive letters to their city council or state legislature or in publishing an op-ed in their local paper on a topic of interest to the class.
- A history teacher could be recognized for an oral history project that leads to an honest community discussion about school segregation.
- A journalism teacher could be recognized for a project that would help students learn how to discern fact from fiction and how to evaluate news sources for accuracy and for bias.
- A government teacher could be recognized for a project in which students identify a local issue that affects them, research possible policy solutions, and then propose the solution to the appropriate governmental body—the city council, the state legislature, or Congress.

How Can Teachers Apply?

Interested teachers should complete the enclosed application. For additional copies of the application, visit <http://www.nasbe.org/project/civic-engagement-champions/>.

Applications are due at NASBE headquarters on June 10. Submit a PDF copy of the application, not to exceed 10 pages, to cec@nasbe.org.

How Will Winners Be Chosen?

A panel of NASBE’s education partners, plus representatives from the state board of education in each of the four participating states, will make the final decisions about this year’s winners. One winner in each of the four participating states will be recognized.

Winners will be announced at NASBE’s Annual Conference, held this year in Omaha, Nebraska, on October 16–19. Winners will be provided with travel expenses and hotel accommodations and should be prepared to attend the conference in person. Winners will be notified by September 15.

For more information, visit <http://www.nasbe.org/project/civic-engagement-champions/> or contact Kris Amundson at kjamundson@kjastrategies.com.

Teacher Application—Civic Engagement Champions Award

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The award will be open to middle school teachers in all disciplines.

In this application, describe what you are doing to promote civic engagement with students. Please use no more than **10 total pages** to respond to the following questions. You may include supporting materials such as news articles or a letter of support from a colleague teacher as part of your application. Please also include a letter of support from your school principal. **Please include the best email address and phone number for us contact you.**

Applications must be submitted no later than **June 10**. Send a PDF of your application to cec@nasbe.org.

I. Tell us about yourself.

How long have you been a teacher? Why did you choose this profession? What subjects and grades do you teach? Why did you choose to become a middle school teacher? In what ways do you demonstrate leadership in your school? Outside your classroom?

II. Tell us about your school and your students.

What grade levels are included in your school? Where is it located? What are the demographics of your student body? What are the things your school does particularly well?

III. Tell us about the work you do to promote civic engagement.

What do/did you do to promote civic engagement with your students? What are/were your learning objectives? How is/was this focus on civic engagement embedded into the overall learning for your class? Was this a sustained effort for civic engagement over time or a time-specific project? What did your students do? What have been the results?

NASBE

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IV. Reflection

What has worked with your students? Will you do the same thing in future years? If not, what would you change? What have you learned about your own teaching? About your students?

Name of person submitting this application: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

2019 CEC Timeline

May 10–June 10: NASBE, states, and partners actively promote the Civic Engagement Champions Program.

June 10: Applications due at NASBE headquarters.

June 10–15: NASBE conducts a review to ensure that all applications are complete.

June 15: NASBE sends state applications to the state partners.

June 15–July 15: State partners conduct a ranking process to select up to 5 finalists.

July 15: State partners return up to 5 applications to NASBE.

August 1: NASBE sends copies of state-selected applications to ALL members of the selection committee (partner organizations plus state partners).

By September 15 (date TBD): 1 winner per state is selected.

October 16–19: Winners of the Civic Engagement Champions will be announced at the NASBE Annual Conference in Omaha.