2026 Crystal Apple Awards NOMINATION PACKET

Award Winners Announced
Thursday, May 14th at the inaugural
Excellence in Education Awards Ceremony
YV-Tech, doors open at 5:00 pm
Tickets On Sale Now $5
www.YakimaSchoolsFoundation.org

EXCELLENCE
IN EDUCATION
AWARDS

The Crystal Apple Awards were established in 1988 by Yakima's business community. It honors the certified educator profession as a whole by awarding certificated individuals who positively impact the lives and futures of their students. The goals of the Crystal Apple Awards are to:

- Reward excellence in education in the Yakima Public Schools.
- Encourage creative and quality instruction.
- Encourage the development of a positive learning environment.
- Encourage excellent educators to remain in education as a career.
- Provide incentive for individual initiative on the part of educators.
- Contribute in a substantive way to the improvement of education in the Yakima School District.

Nominations Due April 17, 2026

Yakima Schools Foundation Chairs

Shawna Masters, Executive Director

Sam Johnson, President

Yakima School District Liaisons

Christopher Miller, Human Resources Director

Kirsten Fitterer, Chief Communications Officer

The nominator coordinates all materials, and supplies them to abarca.karla@ysd7.org by 4:00 pm on Friday, April 17, 2026.

Nomination Criteria

The selection committee will use a rubric based on the following criteria as well as years of service. For the best success, the nomination and letters of support should include **a combined collection of evidence** that represents the criteria below (with cited examples).

Focus on the student:

1. The nominee's primary focus is on the student.
2. The nominee makes a positive impact on students.
3. The nominee demonstrates enthusiasm and versatility in dealing with the individual needs of students.
4. The nominee has the ability to reach students in ways, which contribute to their increased knowledge, talents, and self-esteem.
5. The nominee exhibits creative use of resources and curriculum.
6. The nominee inspires students to appreciate and seek learning in order to attain their maximum potential in life.

Foster and manage a safe, positive learning environment:

7. The nominee creates an environment of respect and rapport.
8. The nominee establishes a culture for learning.
9. The nominee manages classroom procedures.
10. The nominee manages student behavior.
11. The nominee organizes the physical learning space.

Exhibits collaborative and collegial practices:

12. The nominee develops and supports outstanding peer relationships.
13. The nominee develops parental support and respect.

Knowledge of subject:

14. Dedication to professional growth
15. Thorough knowledge of their subject matter
16. Ability to share that knowledge effectively with students
17. Willingness to share their expertise with other education professionals.

Eligibility

1. Individuals nominated previously may be nominated again; previous award recipients may not.

2. Nominees must be classroom teachers or other certificated employees—such as counselors, librarians, nurses, administrators or psychologists with a valid and current teaching credential or OSPI-issued certification (valid for the 2025-2026 school year)—who have demonstrated a commitment to excellence in education.

3. Individuals nominated must have been full-time employees with the Yakima School District for the last two years.

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Nomination Procedures

1. Who can nominate? Anyone! Except for the nominee themselves and the nominee's evaluator (although the evaluator can write a letter of support).

2. What will the nominator need to turn in?
   a. The nomination form and a statement from the nominator as to how and why the nominee meets the nomination criteria.
   b. Two letters of support (only two). Letters should speak to the nomination criteria listed in this packet since that is what is used by the selection committee to select the winners. Letters of support may be from a student, former student, parent, community member, teacher, administrator or school-related group. Any other letters outside the required two will not be forwarded on to the Selection Committee.
   c. A biographical and career statement for the nominee (resume or link to LinkedIn (if up to date) is fine).
   d. Include 3-5 photos of nominee's skills in action.

3. Many of the Selection Committee members are local business leaders in the community. Please avoid education acronyms and/or explain terms.
4. The building principal and human resources must sign off on the nomination showing the candidate is certified through the state and not under disciplinary action with YSD. Human Resources will verify years of service at YSD.

The Selection Process

Completed nominations will be reviewed by a panel of selectors from the fields of education, business, and public service. **The selection of Crystal Apple Award recipients will be based upon the documents supporting each nomination and how they speak to the nomination criteria**. Selection Committee members utilize a rubric and rate the nominee based on evidence found in the nomination and letters of support that match the nomination criteria. In addition, for every 5 years of service at YSD, the nominee is given 1 point in the rubric. The award process will not discriminate against any nominee based on race, gender, age, or religion.

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2026 Crystal Apple Award Nomination

Information contained in the nomination materials will be confidential and used only by the Crystal Apple Awards Selection Committee. However, a copy of the packet will also be given to the nominee following the Excellence in Education gala on May 14th, 2026.

Please examine closely the nomination criteria and the nomination procedures before starting the nomination process. Include all of the information requested at the time the nomination is submitted or the nomination will not be accepted. Signatures indicated on this form are REQUIRED.

COMPLETE NOMINATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY EMAIL TO abarca.karla@ysd7.org BY 4:00PM ON FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 2026.

1. NOMINEE information:

_____

(Name) (School/building)

2. Grade Level and/or Subjects Taught:_____

_____

3. NOMINATOR information:

_____

(Name) (School/building -address if not YSD staff)

_____

(Email)

_____

(Daytime telephone) (Evening telephone)

4. Please indicate your role (s): ○School staff ○Teacher ○Student ○Parent ○Former student

○Community Member ○Other_____

5. NOMINATOR: Why is your nominee deserving of this recognition?

*Referencing the nomination criteria, **please include a page** to tell the committee why this person is deserving of a Crystal Apple.*

6. Biography/Career Summary

***Please include a page** with a brief biographical and career summary of the person you are nominating. A list of professional activities related to the individual's expertise, academic coursework, workshops, committees, awards and honors is helpful. Please also include information with regard to any community service in which the individual is or has been involved (speak to nomination criteria). A **one-page** current résumé prepared by the nominee is also acceptable.*

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7. Include Two Letters of Support (instructions below)

8. Include 3-5 Photos of Nominee's Skills in Action

Photos should clearly demonstrate the nominee's involvement, impact, and engagement for which they will be recognized for. Examples include but are not limited to leading a group, serving the community, coaching, mentoring, collaborating with a team, etc.

9. NOMINATOR Signature_____Date_____

10. Building Principal Signature_____Date_____

Two Letters of Support

Two letters of support (only two) are required. Letters should speak to the nomination criteria since that is what is used by the selection committee to select the winners. Letters of support may be from a student, former student, parent, community member, teacher, administrator or school-related group. Any other letters outside the required two will not be forwarded on to the Selection Committee.

A. Letter of Support #1

_____

(Name) (School/building -address if not YSD staff)

_____

(Email)

_____

(Daytime telephone) (Evening telephone)

Please indicate your role(s): ○School staff ○Teacher ○Student ○Parent ○Former student

○Community Member ○Other_____

For the best chance of this nominee advancing, please speak to the award criteria listed in the packet.

Signature_____Date_____

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B. Letter of Support #2

_____

(Name) (School/Building or Address if not YSD staff)

_____

(Email)

_____

(Daytime telephone) (Evening telephone)

Please indicate your role(s): ○School staff ○Teacher ○Student ○Parent ○Former student

○Community Member ○Other_____

For the best chance of this nominee advancing, please speak to the award criteria listed in the packet.

Signature_____Date_____

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