

Know someone making an exceptional impact in Special Education? Recognize their dedication by nominating them for the Excellence in Special Education Award.

The Folsom Cordova Unified School District Special Education Community Advisory Committee (CAC) is hosting an awards ceremony to show our recognition of, and appreciation for, individuals who have shown excellence or made contributions to special education. We rely on community members, staff, parents, students, and CAC members to identify those individuals who deserve recognition.

Up to one (1) award may be granted in each of the following categories:

1. Community Partnership/Organization (Non-Profit Organizations, WorkAbility Partners, Adult Transition Program Partners, etc.)
2. Parent/Caregiver/Guardian
3. Administrator (Principals, Assistant Principals, Program Coordinators, Program Specialists, Teacher Support Development Mentors, Activity Directors, etc.)
4. Classified Employee (Office Staff, Maintenance and Operations, Child Nutrition, Technology, Student Care, etc.)
5. Transportation (Drivers, Dispatch, etc.)
6. Health Services (Nurses, Licensed Vocational Nurses, Department Staff, etc.)
7. Certificated Designated Instruction and Services (DIS) Provider (Speech-Language Pathologists, School Psychologists, School Social Workers, Orientation and Mobility Services, Adapted Physical Education, Visual Impairment, Deaf and Hard of Hearing, etc.)
8. Classified Designated Instruction and Services (DIS) Provider (Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Mental Health Specialists, Behavior Specialists, Lead Behavior Support Assistants, Behavior Support Assistants, Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants, Speech-Language Pathology Assistants, Wellness Specialists, etc.)
9. Paraeducator/Instructional Assistant
10. Elementary General Education Teacher
11. Secondary General Education Teacher
12. Elementary Special Education Teacher
13. Secondary Special Education Teacher
14. Inclusive practice - Student
15. Inclusive practice - Certificated Staff (Teachers, Certificated DIS, Administrators, etc.)
16. Inclusive practice - Classified Staff (Office Staff, Maintenance and Operations, Child Nutrition, Technology, Student Care, Paraeducator/Instructional Assistant, Transportation, Classified DIS, etc.)



To nominate an outstanding employee, student, parent, or community member, **visit the following link or scan a QR-code:**
[Excellence in Special Education Award Nominations](https://forms.gle/u59UzdrZMdwzULkcA)
<https://forms.gle/u59UzdrZMdwzULkcA> (raw link)

Nomination forms are due by Monday, March 1, 2027.

PROCESS:

- **Nomination forms are due by Monday, March 1, 2027.**
- Recipients are reviewed and chosen by a subcommittee of the CAC.
- Recipients will be selected on the strength of the individual nominations.
- The committee may request further clarification of nominations.
- The committee welcomes all input but will make the final decision.
- Nominees agree to be videotaped and/or photographed for the awards ceremony.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

The CAC faces the important task of selecting one award recipient in each category. The committee is committed to ensuring broad representation of individuals who provide exceptional services to students of all ages and grade levels across the FCUSD community. Nominees should demonstrate outstanding contributions that go above and beyond their job responsibilities, general expectations, or the typical role of a parent or caregiver (depending on the category).

High priority consideration will be given (but not limited to) activities in the following areas:

Community Partnership/Organization

- Contributes time, expertise, or resources to enhance educational opportunities for the FCUSD students.
- Advocates for inclusive practices and supports school-community collaboration.
- Partners with FCUSD to provide mentorship, sponsorship, or services that benefit students with special needs.

Parent/Caregiver/Guardian

- Shares valuable information and resources with staff and other families.
- Organizes or participates in training programs for parents and educators.
- Provides direct support to school programs through volunteering or advocacy.
- Actively engages in parent groups, PTO/PTSO/PTA/PTSA, or community events to strengthen partnerships.

Administrator

- Creates a culture that values and celebrates special education within the school community.
- Articulates and implements a clear vision for inclusive practices and future program development.
- Provides resources and professional development to staff for supporting students with special needs.
- Demonstrates leadership in policy and decision-making that promotes equity and inclusion.

Classified Employee

- Promotes achievement and participation of students with special needs.

- Facilitates social communication and peer interactions.
- Encourages independence and self-confidence in students.
- Partners with teachers and specialists to implement support strategies.
- Demonstrates respect and commitment to inclusion in daily responsibilities.

Transportation

- Ensures safe, reliable, and caring transportation for students.
- Builds positive relationships that foster trust and comfort for students and families.
- Demonstrates flexibility and problem-solving to meet individual student needs.

Health Services

- Provides essential health care that supports student learning and attendance.
- Collaborates with staff and families to address medical needs and emergency plans.
- Advocates for student well-being in all school activities.

Certificated Designated Instruction and Services (DIS) Providers

- Implements specialized services (speech, psychology, adapted PE, etc.) that enable access to curriculum.
- Collaborates with educators and families to support student goals.
- Uses innovative approaches to address unique learning and developmental needs.

Classified DIS Providers

- Provides therapeutic and behavioral support that enhances student participation.
- Works collaboratively with school teams to implement individualized plans.
- Demonstrates expertise and compassion in delivering services.

Paraeducator/Instructional Assistant

- Delivers individualized support that promotes academic and social success.
- Encourages independence and skill development.
- Collaborates with teachers and specialists to implement instructional strategies.
- Demonstrates creativity and patience in meeting diverse student needs.

Elementary & Secondary General Education Teachers

- Demonstrates exceptional teaching practices that promote student engagement, achievement, and growth.
- Uses innovative and effective instructional strategies to meet the diverse learning needs of students.
- Creates a positive, supportive, and welcoming classroom environment where all students can succeed.
- Shows leadership in curriculum development, instructional improvement, or school-wide initiatives that enhance student learning.
- Collaborates effectively with colleagues, families, and support staff to support student success.
- Encourages critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, and active participation in learning.

- Demonstrates dedication to fostering strong relationships with students and supporting their academic and personal growth.
- Serves as a positive role model through professionalism, innovation, and commitment to educational excellence.

Elementary & Secondary Special Education Teachers

- Exceptional teaching practices that promote student engagement, growth, and achievement.
- Development and implementation of effective instructional strategies that address diverse learning needs.
- Creation of individualized education programs (IEPs) that foster academic, social, behavioral, and functional growth.
- Strong collaboration with families, general education staff, related service providers, and support personnel to ensure student success.
- Leadership in implementing instructional or social practices that enhance achievement and participation for students with special needs.
- Creative approaches to differentiated instruction, accommodations, and behavior management.
- Dedication to fostering student independence, self-advocacy, and meaningful progress toward individual goals.
- Commitment to continuous improvement, innovation, and excellence in special education services.

Inclusive Practice – Student

Depending on the nature and strength of the nominations received, the committee may, at its discretion, select more than one award recipient in a category when appropriate.

- Actively promotes peer acceptance and inclusion.
- Provides friendship, encouragement, and leadership in creating a caring school culture.
- Serves as a positive role model by demonstrating leadership, compassion, and understanding among peers.
- Participates in activities, clubs, programs, or initiatives that promote diversity, belonging, and school connectedness.
- Advocates for equitable opportunities and helps create a school culture where every student feels valued and included.
- Encourages collaboration, peer support, and mutual respect among students from diverse backgrounds and experiences.
- Makes a positive impact on the school community by helping others feel accepted, supported, and engaged.
- Consistently demonstrates actions that strengthen a welcoming, inclusive, and caring environment for all students.

Inclusive Practice - Certificated Staff

- Demonstrates a strong commitment to inclusive practices that ensure all students have meaningful opportunities to learn, participate, and belong within the school community.

- Creates classroom environments that foster acceptance, respect, and high expectations for students with diverse abilities, backgrounds, and learning needs.
- Collaborates effectively with special and general education staff, related service providers, administrators, and families to support student success and remove barriers to participation.
- Adapts curriculum, instruction, materials, and assessments to meet the diverse needs of learners while maintaining access to rigorous educational opportunities.
- Uses creative and innovative strategies to engage students with varying strengths, interests, and support needs.
- Promotes student voice, self-advocacy, independence, and meaningful participation in academic, social, and extracurricular activities.
- Serves as a leader and advocate for inclusive practices by sharing expertise, mentoring colleagues, and supporting school-wide efforts that benefit all students.
- Demonstrates a commitment to equity, belonging, and positive outcomes for students with disabilities through daily practice and sustained collaboration.
- Makes a measurable impact on student achievement, engagement, relationships, and overall school connectedness through inclusive educational practices.

Inclusive Practice - Classified Staff

- Demonstrates a strong commitment to inclusive practices that promote belonging, participation, and success for students with disabilities across all school environments.
- Builds positive relationships with students and supports meaningful engagement in academic, social, and extracurricular activities.
- Collaborates effectively with teachers, related service providers, administrators, and families to support inclusive educational experiences.
- Develops and implements creative strategies that help remove barriers and increase student access to learning opportunities and school activities.
- Supports students in developing independence, confidence, self-advocacy, and meaningful connections with peers.
- Serves as a positive role model by fostering welcoming, respectful, and supportive environments for all students.
- Advocates for equitable access to educational programs, services, and opportunities throughout the school community.
- Demonstrates flexibility, initiative, and leadership in supporting inclusive practices and student success.
- Makes a measurable impact on student participation, engagement, and sense of belonging through consistent, student-centered support.

For all categories, the nominee (for additional consideration):

- Attended community events in support of the students
- Volunteered in leadership roles
- Demonstrated commitment to working with community services or agencies.

Award winners will be selected without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, religion, sexual orientation, marital and/or parental status.

EVENT DETAILS:

The Community Advisory Committee Excellence in Special Education Award Ceremony will commence at 5:30 p.m. on April 21, 2027 in the Jill Solberg Performing Arts Center, Folsom High School, located at 1999 Prairie City Road, Folsom, CA 95630. At the Awards Ceremony all nominees will receive a certificate of recognition and the top award recipients will receive a special recognition.

If you have any questions or have any issues with the nomination form, please contact Lilia Neal at lneal@fcusd.org