

POLICY 3421
DISTRICT RECOGNITION AWARDS

Employee actions contribute to the success and achievements of the district. Therefore, it is in the best interest of the district to employ competent, committed employees to provide effective and proficient services to the district's students, families, and staff.

The district has two types of annual recognition, service and peer-to-peer awards.

Service awards express appreciation for employees' dedication and service at established milestones, including 5-, 15-, 25-years and retirement. Peer-to-peer awards allow staff to nominate colleagues based on criteria established by the district's Recognition Committee.

The goal is to:

- Celebrate the culture of the district
- Encourage proficiencies
- Recognize longevity
- Acknowledge exemplary service
- Provide an instrument to recognize ongoing employee contributions and dedication, as well as a means to acknowledge and retain employees
- Offer rewards to award recipients that are useful in their daily lives

Service awards recipients shall be recognized in conjunction with their current department/school. Peer-to-peer award recipients also shall be recognized in conjunction with their current department/school.

LEGAL REF.: IRS Regulations

CROSS REF.: 3420 – Purchasing
3110 – Annual Operating Budget
3112 – Budget Administration
3121 – Financial Accounting
4260 – Personnel Records
6100 – Mission, Vision, Core Values and Strategic Goals

AFFIRMED: March 2021

Covered Employees

All full-time equivalent (FTE) employees are eligible for service and peer-to-peer awards. Full-time equivalent refers to employees in the following groups: administrative support professional; administrator, supervisory, technical; community and student support; educational support professional; facilities; food services; interpreter; and teacher.

Timesheet employees, such as substitutes, coaches, etc., may be nominated under the Friend in Education category of peer-to-peer awards and do not qualify for service awards.

Years of Service Criteria

The Office of Human Resources will identify employees with 5, 15, and 25 continuous years of school district service, as well as retirees with creditable years of retirement service annually and provide a list to Recognition Committee.

Service dates will be based on anniversary dates pulled as of Sept. 30. Retirements will be based on those who have filed official paperwork with the Office of Human Resources between April 1 of the previous year through March 30 of the current year. These criteria will be implemented effective Sept. 30, 2020, and will not be retroactive.

School District Service Defined

Qualifying years of service toward the 5-, 15-, and 25-year awards are defined as continuous years of full-time equivalent (FTE) status.

Creditable Retirement Service Defined

Employees with any number of continuous years of service as a full-time equivalent (FTE) employee with the district shall qualify for the retirement award.

Peer-to-peer Awards Criteria

Nominations will be submitted by each building/school by the end of January each year.

Peer-to-peer awards have the following criteria:

- Areas regarding positive relationships, innovation, instruction, communication, and professional learning, and ethical practice.
- The district's core values include safety, teamwork, unity, diversity, equity, nurturing, trust, and stability.
- Additional criteria for administration at the Education Support Center include administrative skills, school/department leadership, service district leadership, and professional development.
- All recommendations will be vetted by the Office of Human Resources to ensure honorees do not have pending personnel issues. In addition, employees who have received disciplinary action from HR and/or their direct supervisor will not be eligible to receive employee recognition of any kind for five years from the last date discipline was issued.

Program Administration

The Recognition Committee is defined as a group of individuals tasked with reviewing, coordinating, budgeting and implementing for the district's annual recognition efforts in conjunction with necessary district staff. The members may include a variety of past winners, as well as representatives from departments critical to the success of said programs, such as the Finance Department, Office of Communications, and Office of Human Resources. As individuals step down from the committee, the committee shall agree nominate and approve new members. Current recognition efforts include a gift for service and peer-to-peer awards based on an amount designated by the Recognition Committee annually. District purchasing policies shall be followed when selecting vendors.

Records

The Office of Human Resources will maintain service and peer-to-peer award records.

Funds

All purchases for awards are dependent on the availability of Recognition funds. Donations are accepted.

Accounting and IRS Implications

Internal Revenue Service laws and regulations determine which awards are considered taxable wages to employees. IRS laws and regulations are periodically updated and taxability is subject to change.

The Recognition Committee will provide all previous calendar year-end IRS reporting information to the Finance Department by the end of the first week of January of the subsequent year, annually, to meet any W-2 wage reporting deadlines established by the IRS.