



National Association of
State Boards of Education

NASBE Awards

Each year, the National Association of State Boards of Education recognizes distinguished leaders for their contributions to improving education for all children. Up to three **“Distinguished Service”** awards are given to state board members from across the country for their outstanding contributions to education. One **additional distinguished service award** is given to a student board member or member of a board’s student advisory council. Three awards are given to non-board member individuals: the **“Policy Leader of the Year”**, **“Friend of Education,”** and the **“David A. Kysilko Award.”**

Winners are nationally recognized at NASBE’s Annual Conference each year.

Distinguished Service Award(s):

This award recognizes the outstanding contributions to education made by state board of education members from across the country. NASBE members may nominate current or recently retired board members whose efforts on behalf of education are deemed to be of outstanding benefit to the quality of American education and the shaping of its future. Up to three awards may be given each year.

NEW—Distinguished Student Service Award:

This award recognizes the outstanding contributions made by a student member of a state board of education or student member of a state board student advisory council. A nominee for the Distinguished Student Service Award must be a current student member or a student member who has recently concluded their service. *This award is not required to be awarded if a candidate of sufficient merit is not among those recommended.*

Policy Leader of the Year Award:

This award recognizes the contributions to education made by national or state policymakers and education leaders. NASBE members may nominate individuals (*other than members of state boards of education*) who have specifically had a broad and substantial impact on education policy and the education system, either in their role as national policymakers and administrators, or as citizens who have contributed to the improvement of education through venues such as national commissions, task forces, or other significant boards and organizations. Additionally, members of the Awards

Committee may identify individuals for consideration for this award based on their awareness of the national education landscape and in consultation with NASBE staff, members, and leadership.

Friend of Education Award:

This award recognizes citizens whose primary work may be outside the realm of education policy and education systems, but whose contributions to education are of national significance and enduring. NASBE members may nominate a person or organization (for example, individuals or organizations from the fields of business, the arts, entertainment, or sports), whose past or current efforts on behalf of education are deemed to be of outstanding benefit to the students in our nation's schools, to the people who work in the field of education, and to the quality of American education overall. Additionally, members of the Awards Committee may identify individuals for consideration for this award based on their awareness of the national education landscape and in consultation with NASBE staff, members and leadership.

David A. Kysilko Award:

This award recognizes the outstanding contributions of individuals who have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to NASBE values and service of state boards of education. Current or former state board members are not eligible for this award. The focus of this award is on “unsung heroes”—service-oriented individuals who have often worked outside the spotlight and made significant contributions through their commitment, dedication, and service to the specific work of state boards of education, state education systems, or NASBE. This award is named after David Kysilko who was a longtime employee at NASBE in the position of editorial director. *This award is not required to be awarded if a candidate of sufficient merit is not among those recommended.*

Distinguished Service Award(s)

This award recognizes the outstanding contributions to education made by **state board of education members** from across the country. NASBE members may nominate current or recently retired board members whose efforts on behalf of education are deemed to be of outstanding benefit to the quality of American education and the shaping of its future. Up to three awards may be given each year.

A nominee for the Distinguished Service Award must be a current or recently retired board of education member who meets the following criteria:

- have exhibited personal and professional dedication to improving American education through specific state and/or national achievements of singular merit within the past three years.
- have exemplified throughout the individual's career the finest objective, informed, nonpartisan leadership on issues within the individual's purview.
- have demonstrated successful collaboration with other individuals, organizations, or agencies in the field of education for effective, mutually beneficial purposes.
- have worked consistently to bring greater benefit to the educational experience of all students through achievements reflective of the principal purposes of NASBE.
- While not a requirement for nomination, service on a NASBE committee or the Board of Directors will be a preferred consideration when choosing Distinguished Service Award winners.

Distinguished Student Service Award

This award recognizes the outstanding contributions made by a **student member** of a state board of education or student member of a state board student advisory council. *This award is not required to be awarded if a candidate of sufficient merit is not among those recommended.*

A nominee for the Distinguished Student Service Award must be a current student member or a student member who has recently concluded their service, and who demonstrates the following attributes:

- has made specific and identifiable impacts on the policy discussions and actions of the state board of which the student is a member.
- exemplified throughout the individual's service the finest objective, informed, nonpartisan leadership on issues within the individual's purview.
- demonstrated successful collaboration with other individuals, organizations, or agencies for effective, mutually beneficial purposes.
- has participated in NASBE activity and made a meaningful impact on NASBE's commitment to being informed by student voice.

NASBE Policy Leader of the Year Award

This award recognizes the contributions to education made by national or state policymakers and education leaders. NASBE members may nominate individuals (other than members of state boards of education) who have specifically had a broad and substantial impact on education policy and the education system, either in their role as national policymakers and administrators, or as citizens who have contributed to the improvement of education through venues such as national commissions, task forces, or other significant boards and organizations. Additionally, members of the Awards Committee may identify individuals for consideration for this award based on their awareness of the national education landscape and in consultation with NASBE staff, members, and leadership.

A nominee for Policy Leader of the Year must meet the following criteria:

- significant national or state level impact on education policy and the education system broadly recognized among the state and national education communities over an extended period.
- demonstrated ability to work effectively and reach specific goals in collaboration with other individuals.
- significant nonpartisan, objective achievements in leadership for public education. This leadership may be formal or informal.

Some examples of the types of individuals recognized with this award include:

- Governors; Mayors; Members of Congress
- National advocates or champions of children's issues or learning
- Significant authors of education books or other writings
- State education chief

Friend of Education Award

This award recognizes citizens whose primary work may be outside the realm of education policy and education systems, but whose contributions to education are of national significance and enduring. NASBE members may nominate a person or organization (for example, individuals or organizations from the fields of business, the arts, entertainment, or sports), whose past or current efforts on behalf of education are deemed to be of outstanding benefit to the students in our nation's schools, to the people who work in the field of education, and to the quality of American education overall. Additionally, members of the Awards Committee may identify individuals for consideration for this award based on their awareness of the national education landscape and in consultation with NASBE staff, members, and leadership.

A nominee for the Friend of Education Award must meet the following criteria:

- have exhibited personal and professional dedication to improving American education through specific state and/or national achievements of singular and sustained merit within the past three years.
- have demonstrated successful collaboration with other individuals, organizations, or agencies in the field of education for effective, mutually beneficial purposes.
- have worked consistently to bring greater benefit to the educational experience of all students through achievements reflective of the principal purposes of NASBE.

Some examples of the types of individuals/organizations recognized through this award:

- State/National Foundations (as organizations)
- State/National Foundation leaders
- Education research institutes
- State/national education initiatives
- National association leaders
- Businesses

NASBE's David A. Kysilko Award

This award recognizes the outstanding contributions of individuals who have demonstrated an unwavering commitment to NASBE values and service of state boards of education. Current or former State Board members are not eligible for this award. The focus of this award is on “unsung heroes”—service-oriented individuals who have often worked outside the spotlight and made significant contributions through their commitment, dedication and service to the specific work of state boards of education, state education systems, or NASBE. This award is named after David Kysilko who was a longtime employee at NASBE in the position of editorial director. *This award is not required to be awarded if a candidate of sufficient merit is not among those recommended.*

A nominee for the David A. Kysilko Award must meet the following criteria:

- have exhibited personal and professional dedication to improving American education through lengthy and sustained service of a nature that may not typically receive significant attention.
- have provided expert support and made notable contributions to policy and practice development, or effective management and operations, or to NASBE.
- is well regarded by peers and colleagues, preferably members of a state board of education, for their expertise, effectiveness, capability, and service.
- have demonstrated successful collaboration with other individuals, organizations, or agencies in the field of education.

Some examples of the types of individuals/organizations recognized through this award:

- State board executives
- State board attorneys or other state board staff members
- NASBE staff
- State department of education staff who have supported state board work and who have made a significant and sustained contribution in effective policy or program development or implementation.