



2026 Dr. Marilyn Nicholas National Student Teacher of the Year

Since the award's establishment in 1994, the Association of Teacher Educators and KDP have named only a select few from around the United States as National Student Teachers/Interns of the Year. In March 2025, we renamed the award the Dr. Marilyn Nicholas National Student Teacher of the Year award. We are honored to partner for this prestigious award in offering national recognition, at least one speaking engagement, and a \$2,000 award to our 2026 recipient.

AWARD OVERVIEW

This award recognizes one student teacher/intern who has demonstrated, during their student teaching/intern experience, an outstanding ability to:

- Plan and develop a repertoire of classroom management skills and instructional strategies that support the needs and curriculum of all students;
- Establish effective interpersonal relationships with students, parents, faculty, and staff; and
- Reflect on the teaching and learning process.

The online application is due by noon EDT on June 30, 2026. No applications will be accepted after the deadline. You may access the application at <https://wkf.ms/42Y2Gnz>.

Applications will be reviewed in a two-round process. In the first round, reviewers will score all applications, selecting the top four candidates to continue for further evaluation. The second round of review will focus exclusively on the top four candidates from round one to select this year's recipient.

*Note: If instructional strategies are not exemplary during final judging, no award will be made.

The recipient will be announced on August 30, 2026.

Application questions may be directed to Samantha Tarlton Procento at sprocento@kdp.org.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for this award, at the time of application, the applicant must:

- be an undergraduate student, post-baccalaureate, or graduate student enrolled in a teacher education program (leading to teacher certification) at an accredited institution of higher education and have completed at least 12 credit hours in that institution's teacher education program;
- have an overall grade-point average of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale;
- be or have completed student teaching/interning full time in a curricular area for which they are eligible for certification in a PK–12 classroom in an accredited public or private school where they spend the majority of the day in direct instructional contact with students;
- be committed to teaching as a full-time career;
- seek nomination or recommendation from their supervising teacher, university supervisor, or director of field experiences; and
- adhere to the requirements as outlined in the application materials.

Note: Up to three candidates from the same institution are allowed to submit applications per award cycle. Applicants need NOT be members of the Association of Teacher Educators or KDP to apply.

GUIDELINES FOR APPLICATION

This application form must be completed following all of the guidelines.

- All responses must reflect the applicant's best writing skills, be typed, double-spaced, and conform to the word limitations noted. Applications must represent the highest possible standards to be considered for final judging.
- Part 4 (recommendation) must be provided by the applicant's sponsor or by a representative of the college or university.
- Each applicant must provide general information and essays, unofficial transcripts, written lesson plan, original 30-minute teaching video (on YouTube, Google Drive, or other shareable platform), that includes an introduction, a lesson, and a reflection.

Part 1: General Information.

This form and all materials must be submitted in one sitting. This form does not allow you to save and return.*

I understand.

Applicant's Name*

Current Address*

Permanent Address*

Mobile Phone*

Email Address*

Applicant's University*

University's Contact Person*

Address of Contact Person*

Teaching Major (if applicable)*

Minor(s) (if applicable)*

Certification Level (can select multiple options)

PK-3

K-12

Elementary

Middle

High

Special Education

Other

Start Date of Student Teaching* (mm/dd/yyyy)

End Date of Student Teaching* (mm/dd/yyyy)

Anticipated Date of Graduation or Completion of Credential * (mm/dd/yyyy)

Cooperating Teacher's Name*

Additional Cooperating Teacher's Name (if applicable)

School Where Student Teaching Was Completed*

School Address*

Grade Level of Lesson*

Topic of Lesson*

Sponsor's Name*

Sponsor's Relationship to Applicant*

Address of Sponsor*

Sponsor's Email Address*

Sponsor's Phone Number*

Please select if you are a member of* (can select multiple options)

Association of Teacher Educators

KDP

Neither ATE nor KDP

Please select if your sponsor is a member of* (can select multiple options)

Association of Teacher Educators

KDP

Neither ATE nor KDP

Part 2: Applicant's Background.

Upload a copy of your unofficial transcripts.*

Describe your interests, activities, professional organization affiliations, offices held, employment, and volunteer activities that have contributed to your development as a teacher. (Limit: 200 words)*

Part 3: Applicant's Essays.

A) Professional Strengths: Describe the strengths you bring to the teaching profession. (Limit: 200 words)*

B) Issues Analysis: Identify a problem or issue facing education today and explain how you will address this problem or issue in your teaching career. (Limit: 200 words)*

C) Teaching Metaphor: Create a metaphor to describe teaching as a profession. (Limit: 50 words)*

Part 4: Sponsor's Recommendation.

Please ask your sponsor or a representative of the institution to write a recommendation letter and provide you a copy to submit in your application. The letter should describe two personal and/or professional qualities of you, the applicant, that makes you an exceptional teacher or intern (Limit: 200 words). The letter should also state the relationship to the applicant and conclude with the reference's name and signature.*

Part 5: Video and Lesson Plan.

A recorded lesson (on YouTube, Google Drive, or other shareable platform) showing the student teacher/intern teaching a complete lesson cycle in 30 minutes with their classroom must be submitted. The introduction and reflection may be filmed separately from the lesson portion. It is preferred if the video is in one file. The quality of the submitted video is the responsibility of the

applicant. Please ensure the privacy settings on the recording grant the reviewers access with the link. The video lesson should include the following elements: -Introduction. Introduce yourself and provide a brief description of your class, including the number of students and the context of the lesson you will be teaching. Note: Reviewers expect professional attire. If you are not dressed appropriately, please mention the reason. (Maximum time: 3 minutes) -Lesson. The lesson must consist of a continuous, unedited lesson (no breaks or pauses) showing the student teacher/intern teaching in their own classroom. (Maximum time: 30 minutes) -Reflection. The video should conclude with a reflective analysis where the student teacher/intern responds to the following questions: (1) What did the students learn as a result of this lesson? (2) What did you most like about the lesson? (3) What did you learn from this lesson? (4) What changes, if any, would you make if you were to reteach this lesson? (Maximum time: 5 minutes) Video Lesson: Provide the link(s) to your recorded lesson. **Please ensure the privacy settings on the recording grant the reviewers access with the link or provide the password below.***

Written Lesson Plan: Include the written lesson plan used for the recorded lesson. Please include a description of your class: demographics, students with special needs, students with limited English proficiency, grouping pattern used, if any, and a written reflection of the lesson taught.*

Videos and all other application materials become the property of the Association of Teacher Educators and Kappa Delta Pi.*

I understand.

Judging Criteria

Part 1 (5%) -General Information (5%)

Part 2 (5%) -Applicant's Background (5%)

Part 3 (30%) -Professional Strengths Essay (10%), Issues Analysis Essay (10%), Teaching Metaphor Essay (10%)

Part 4 (0%) -Sponsor's Recommendation (0%)

Part 5 (60%) -Introduction (5%), Video Lesson (30%), Reflection/Analysis (20%), Lesson Plan (5%)*