

FAQ

TEACHER FELLOWSHIP AWARD

What is the Herb Kohl Fellowship Award?

The Herb Kohl Fellowship is a highly prestigious award that honors exceptional educators across Wisconsin. Each year, only 100 outstanding teachers are selected for this competitive recognition, underscoring their dedication, innovation, and impact in the field of education. Each fellow receives a one-time award of \$6,000, with an additional \$6,000 granted to their school—amplifying the award's benefit to both the educator and their learning community.

Who is eligible?

To be considered for the Herb Kohl Fellowship, Pre-K through Grade 12 Wisconsin teachers must first be nominated by a parent, student, teacher, administrator, or community member.

Because the program is designed to recognize the contributions of classroom teachers, individuals serving primarily in administrative or supervisory roles are not eligible.

Additional eligibility details:

- Teachers who have previously received a Kohl Fellowship are **not** eligible to apply again.
- Candidates must plan to continue teaching in their current role for at least one year following receipt of the award.
- Teachers who were nominated and applied in previous years but did **not** receive a Fellowship may reapply if they are nominated again.
- Teachers who may have previously received a **Kohl Student Scholarship** while in high school are eligible.

How can I nominate a Teacher?

Use the online nomination form that appears on this website. Potential candidates cannot self-nominate.

After an Educator is nominated, what is the next step?

Nominated educators are notified by email and invited to apply for the Herb Kohl Fellowship. Those who choose to apply will be evaluated based on several criteria, including:

- Their ability to inspire a love of learning in students
- Their capacity to motivate others
- Their leadership and service both within and beyond the classroom

A sample scoring rubric is available to help applicants understand the evaluation process.

What is the application deadline?

The deadline for submitting a completed application is found on the important information section of the website.

What is the selection process?

The selection process involves two rigorous stages: **regional review** and **statewide review**.

1. Regional Review

All eligible and completed applications are first evaluated at the regional level, coordinated by either:

- The local **Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA)**, or
- The **Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) District Office**, for MPS applicants.

Each CESA or MPS forms a **Regional Selection Committee** composed of a diverse mix of students, parents, teachers, administrators, school board members, civic and business leaders, and media representatives.

Applications are reviewed **anonymously and in randomized batches**. To ensure fairness and consistency:

- Each application is scored **multiple times** by different reviewers.
- Reviewers evaluate applications **independently**, without discussing or sharing evaluations.
- All scores are recorded in a **secure digital system** that protects privacy and tracks scoring activity.

2. Statewide Review

Once regional scores are compiled, the **highest-scoring applications advance** to the statewide level. All applicants are notified by email **whether their application has moved forward**.

The **State Selection Committee**—which includes representatives from the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation, Cooperative Educational Service Agencies, Milwaukee Public Schools, the Wisconsin Newspaper Association Foundation, state education organizations, and community leaders—reviews the regional finalists.

Final Selection

The **top 100 highest-scoring applicants statewide** are selected to receive Herb Kohl Fellowships.

All state-level applicants are notified of their final status individually, and a **public announcement** is made listing **all of the award recipients**.

How will an applicant be notified if they have been chosen to receive a Kohl Fellowship Award?

Each Fellowship recipient is contacted by the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation in late March/early April. The Fellowship grants are sent to the Fellowship recipient and the recipient's school before the end of the school year.

Are there restrictions on how the Fellowship may be used?

There are no restrictions on how a Fellow may use their own \$6,000 award. The Kohl Foundation suggests that the matching grant provided to each Fellowship recipient's schools is used to further advance the specific celebrated work of the winning educator, support the school's workforce development, or for innovation in education. The employing school at the time of application submission is part of the official record and review process. As a result, if employment changes after the application is submitted, the original employing school retains the matching grant recipient.