

It's time for the "Sorenson Legacy Award for Excellence in Arts Education" nominations for 2026!

What are the "Sorenson Legacy Awards for Excellence in Arts Education"?

The Sorenson Legacy Awards (SLA) for Excellence in Arts Education is an annual award for Utah educators in the arts: "Recognizing the essential nature of education in the arts for Utah's students and distinguishing those educators who embrace the arts with excellence in their practice."

Who is eligible?

Do you have an amazing Music, Dance, Theatre, Visual Art, or Film/Media Arts teacher at your school? Or a classroom teacher who is amazing at Arts Integration? Or an incredible, arts-supporting Administrator, or a phenomenal Arts Program? This is your chance to nominate and recognize them! Eligible educators must have a professional license and art form-specific endorsement and be in good standing with their LEA (when applicable - see nomination form for more eligibility requirements and information.)

What does the nomination process entail?

We are doing things differently this year - instead of creating a submission with accompanying materials, - you will now NOMINATE an educator. Selected nominees will be contacted to complete a full award application. [The nomination form is here.](#) You will be asked for general information about the teacher or administrator or program like their school name, address, principal name, etc. You will also be asked to share how this educator impacted the arts and WHY you are nominating them.

What will the educator who is nominated be asked to do if they're selected to fill out a full award application?

Award applications will be evaluated in four different categories with corresponding evidence:

1. Instructional Expertise and impact - Excellence in arts pedagogy; creates best practices, innovates, and utilizes evidence-based practices. This is demonstrated by the nominee submitting a lesson plan w/student artifacts.

2. Community Engagement and Arts Leadership - Exceptional community involvement and champion of the arts, leader in the school and district (Family art nights, engagement w/POPS, creating opportunities for students, participating in leadership committees, etc.)
Demonstrated by an essay prompt from the nominee.

3. Arts for All - Focuses on inclusive practices for all students (Special Education students, Multi-Language Learners, students of all artistic ability, etc.), overcomes challenges and barriers like funding issues, lack of resources, etc. Demonstrated by essay prompt from nominee.

4. Passion and Excellence in the Arts - A true practitioner and life-long performer/creator/artist creates infectious joy and passion for the arts that is passed on to students. Demonstrated by examples of the educator's own artistic practice - a bio/resume, website, articles, photos/videos, etc.

When are the nominations due?

Nominations are due **Friday, January 16th at midnight.**

I have a question about the awards... Who should I contact?

You can contact K-12 Fine Arts Specialist [Liz Bunker](#) or Arts and Wellness Coordinator [Shanda Stenger](#) and we will be happy to help!