

Press Clippings 4/28/2022

Shaw Local News Network/Kane County Chronicle Batavia, St. Charles, Kaneland, Geneva teachers, support staff among nominees in Kane Educator of the Year award categories --- 4/27/2022

By Shaw Local News Network



(Shaw Media file photo) Kristi Purnell, a second grade teacher at Kaneland John Stewart Elementary School in Elburn, was named Elementary School Teacher of the Year during the Kane County Regional Office of Education's 44th Annual Awards Ceremony. The 2022 ceremony will take place Friday, April 29 at the Q Center in St. Charles. Garland said one of Purnell's superpowers is her ability to optimize the strengths of each of her kids. "She truly honors just the uniqueness that you can find in every child and celebrates their strengths," Garland said. "She absolutely optimizes their strengths to help them become the best version of themselves. That's a real natural talent that she has." (Sandy Bressner)

The Kane County Regional Office of Education announced the nominees in several categories for the 46th annual Educator of the Year awards ceremony, which will be held Friday, April 29 at the Q Center in St. Charles.

Nominees for Educational Service Personnel, Elementary/Early Childhood, Middle School, Early Career, Student Support Personnel, High School Teachers and School Administrator were revealed Wednesday in a news release.

Elementary/Early Childhood Category - Early Childhood teachers must teach 50% of their time in the classroom instructing children ages birth through kindergarten. Elementary school teachers must spend at least 50% of their time instructing children kindergarten through 5th grade. In Kane County there are 113 elementary school buildings serving over 52,000 students.

- Laura Manzanos Somoza, District 131, Oak Park Elementary, preschool bilingual/dual language

- Anna Nightingale, District 131, Oak Park Elementary, 2nd & 3rd general education/bilingual

- Barbara Spence, District 101, Grace McWayne Elementary, kindergarten

- Jillian Yaggie, District 302, Kaneland John Shields Elementary, kindergarten

Middle School Category - Teachers must spend at least 50% of their time teaching, in the classroom, to children in levels 6th through 8th grade. In Kane County there are 30 middle school buildings serving over 28,000 students.

- Megan Bockenbauer, District 131, Fred Rodgers Magnet Academy, 7th Grade English language arts

- Faviola Escobar, U-46, Larsen Middle School, 7th Grade Dual Language-Spanish language arts & social studies

- Sandy Ritter, U-46, Tefft Middle School, 6th & 7th grade special education

- Suzanne Satterfield, District 302, Harter Middle School, 7th Grade science & social studies

Early Career Category - Recognize teachers who are in their second to fifth year of teaching.

- Kiera Donnamario, District 131, Waldo Middle School, 7th Grade social studies

- Molly Duda, District 302, Kaneland Blackberry Creek Elementary, K-5th grade cross-categorical/special education teacher

- Danielle Sheppard, District 303, St. Charles North High School, 9th-12th grade art teacher

- Brittany Tres, District 129, West Aurora High School, 9th-12th English language learner - math

Educational Service Personnel Category - These team members are critical to the operation of their schools. This category includes secretaries, bus drivers, aides, custodians and others who work in the district school system.

- Cynthia Anderson, District 304, Geneva Middle School South, Sodexo manager
- Thomas Poulin, District 303, St. Charles North High School, deans' assistant/head basketball & softball coach
- Jason Schiller, District 129, West Aurora High School, custodian
- Wilfredo (Wil) Torres, District 131, Benavides S.T.E.A.M Academy, utility custodian

High School Teacher Category - Teachers must spend more than 50% of their time teaching, in the classroom, to children in levels 9th through 12th grade. In Kane County there are 16 high school buildings serving over 36,000 students.

- Jacob Burlingame, District 303, St. Charles North High School, English teacher
- Juan Figueroa, U-46, Elgin High School, teacher for dual-credit Spanish, Language Arts ALE 1

- Jennifer Hoemann, District 302, Kaneland High School, science teacher
- Max Payleitner, District 303, St. Charles East High School, special education and wellness teacher
- Patricia Sampson, District 129, West Aurora High School, music and band teacher
- Jessica Trilling, District 131, East Aurora Extension, mathematics High School RSSP teacher

School Administrator Category - School Administrators are the instructional leaders of their district. Principals, assistant principals, administrators, coordinators, and directors must spend, at least, 50% of their time on administration duties.

- Sheila Conrad, District 131, Krug Elementary School, principal
- Dr. Sarah Mumm, District 302, Kaneland School District #302, director of educational service early childhood-5th Grade
- Ron Murphy, District 129, West Aurora High School, high school administrator
- Dr. Steve Tucker, U-46, South Elgin High School, assistant principal

Student Support Personnel Category - Student Support Personnel are certified professionals that support students throughout the school day. This category may include nurses, social workers, guidance counselors, psychologists, and media specialists.

- Alina Cyrus, District 129, West Aurora High School, social worker
- Tracy Warwick, District 131, Fred Rodgers Magnet Academy, school counselor

According to the news release, Educator of the Year nominations are submitted by staff, friends and family to recognize exceptional educators.