

Guidance and Overview: Completing the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation Teacher Fellowship Application

Congratulations on being nominated for a Herb Kohl Educational Foundation Teacher Fellowship! This is a prestigious honor that is recognized throughout Wisconsin, and beyond, as a mark of excellence in education. If you have decided to apply for the Teacher Fellowship, the first step is for you to follow the link in the nomination email and build a Personal Profile.

Fill in the required general information: your name, email, phone number (with no spaces, dashes, or parentheses), along with your DPI License Number. This is your 5 or 6 digit File Number, which can be searched easily using this link and your name:

<https://elo.wieducatorlicensing.org/datamart/searchByNameWIDPI.do>. Select the category that best represents your assignment as an educator:

- Elementary School (including early childhood teachers who are licensed as WI teachers and are working as part of a public school's 3K or 4K services, even in community based locations)
- Middle School
- High School
- Special Services (can be PK-12)
- Please note that there is no right answer, and we accept how you see yourself. For instance, it's equally valid for an applicant who teaches special education to 7th grade students in a middle school to select 'Middle School' or 'Special Services.' We don't judge how you see yourself in this context. However, this choice does impact which category recipients are divided into when it comes to Teacher of the Year selection.

Finally, choose the type of school you are associated with from the click down menu.

Click on the 'Validate Profile' button at the bottom to complete your profile, which allows you to view the application once you return to your home screen in SmartSimple.

Eligibility

- Previous teacher fellowship recipients are not eligible to receive a second Fellowship.
- If you've been nominated in the past but have not received a Fellowship, you remain eligible.
- If you are a past Scholarship recipient, having received a Student Excellence or Student Initiative award, you are eligible for a Fellowship.

Please answer the four eligibility questions in order to move forward.

ELIGIBILITY QUESTIONNAIRE

* Are you employed by a Wisconsin school?

- Yes
 No

* Are you a previous Teacher Fellowship Recipient?

- Yes
 No

* Do you plan to continue in your current profession for at least the next school year?

- Yes
 No

* What kind of school do you attend or work in?:

Public School
 Private School
 Homeschool

* Do you have daily face-to-face interactions with students (includes virtually)?

- Yes
 No

Application Information

The Teacher Fellowship application asks you to work your way through using a series of five tabs, which you can follow in sequential order, or click through to jump from section to section. To avoid losing any information, be sure to click 'Save Draft' when leaving any section.

General Information

The information you entered in your profile, along with some of the information from your nomination, automatically completes most of the fields on this tab. However, there are some additional fields you must complete in order to move forward.

Answer the questions regarding your role as an educator.

- If you select 'Yes' under Certificate of Indian Blood Status, answer with your Tribal Nation Affiliation and upload a copy of either your Certificate of Indian Blood or your tribal affiliation card. Please note this is not limited to the 11 federally recognized tribal nations of Wisconsin, but applicants must upload and provide supporting documentation of affiliation or eligibility for membership of any tribal nation.

Type of School:

- * In what type of school are you teaching?:
- Public
- Private

* Describe your current teaching assignment:

* Certificate of Indian Blood Status:

Applicants from Wisconsin's First Nations or indigenous persons living in Wisconsin may identify tribal affiliation or American Indian heritage. Checking either "yes" or "no" neither preferences nor disqualifies a candidate for an award.

- Yes
- No

- **If you select Public, Save Draft for Schools to appear.**
- Fill in the School Information Section.

▼ School Information

Use the School Lookup field to look up the name of your school. If you work for multiple schools and/or are employed by the district, select your district instead.

Application

There are two parts to this section: 1) Professional Experience, Preparation, Activities, and Awards, and 2) Professional Reflections.

▼ Professional Experience, Preparation, Activities, and Awards

Click the 'Add Experience and Activities' button below to list your professional preparation, education experience, and service, civic, and citizenship based activities

 Add Experience and Activities

Professional Experience, Preparation, Activities, and Awards:

Once you've clicked the 'Add Experiences and Activities' button, different subsections appear:

- Professional Preparation addresses any education, certifications, professional development, or other learning you have completed to support your role as an educator.
- Educational Experience addresses the places you have worked as an educator, including non-traditional employment that is also relevant to your role as an educator.
- Service, Civic, and Citizenship Based Activities is your personal volunteerism, service, and citizenship activities that you have engaged in that inform your role as a teacher and leader. Consider highlighting the activities that most thoroughly demonstrate the leadership you've shown or the impact you have made, rather than just the things you have participated in.
- Awards and Honors covers any other awards or recognitions you have received related to your role as an educator and leader.
 - Please note that each entry has character limitations, so keep your descriptions brief and concise.

Professional Reflections:

▼ Professional Reflections

This section contains six writing prompts, each with a 500-word limit.

Advice for this section:

- Compose, revise, and edit your responses in a word processing program (e.g., google Docs, Microsoft Word) and then copy/paste the final version into your application.
- Proofread your work! Read it aloud to yourself to help locate errors.
- Write truthfully and tell your story with humility but take credit for your actions and the impact of your decisions as an educator.
- If you are going to describe an activity that several people collaborated on, specifically address your role in that work, and how your work impacted the outcomes of the group's work together.
- Consider how each of the six responses, when read together, can form a larger, more cohesive body of work that describes your leadership and impact.
- Give real-life examples when you can.
- Protect any specifically identifiable information about others when possible.
- Address how your context affects your decisions and impacts your words and actions (including things like geographic location, student populations, role and duties, relative affluence of the school and community, and proximity/availability of resources).
- Describe the challenges you have faced, or the barriers you've overcome, in becoming the educational leader you are today.
- Focus on subjects like innovation, leadership, impact/results, and equity through your words and actions.
- Consider how the letters of recommendation you request support and deepen the evidence for the things that you share in your professional reflections.
- Keep in mind that the 86 public school Kohl Teacher Fellows go on to be considered as candidates for Wisconsin Teacher of the Year.
- With regard to the second writing prompt (Describe how you work to raise achievement for all students. etc.), please consider focusing your answer on how you are addressing equity and gaps through your work with your students, including how you are leveraging equity-based strategies in closing achievement and opportunity gaps for disadvantaged students. There are only 8 school districts in the state of Wisconsin whose student population is 100% white/Caucasian, candidates are expected to be able to discuss their role in addressing the gaps between students of color and other students within their context.

Recommendation

You must secure three letters of recommendation before submitting your application. Use the application to invite recommenders to complete a letter of recommendation form on your behalf. You will be able to monitor this activity including who has been invited, who has accepted and is drafting a letter, when letters are completed, or if invitations are declined from within this tab. You will not, however, be able to access the letters themselves. If you want this information, you must request it directly from the provider and separately from the application.

Invite Recommenders

Read the instructions carefully and be sure that your recommenders fit the specific criteria.

Invite Recommenders

Add Recommenders

Save

Invite

Once you have invited a person to recommend you, their status will change to 'Invited.' They receive an email with an invitation to accept or decline the invitation to submit a letter. Once they respond, their status updates to either 'Accepted' or 'Declined.' Once their letter has been submitted, their recommender status changes to 'Submitted' in your application. If someone declines, or is generally unresponsive, you can also cancel the invitation using the green button with an 'X' in the 'Invite Recommender' sub-menu, and then you have the option to add another recommender in their place.

Advice for this section:

- **Actively manage your invitations and completion of letters of recommendation!**
 - An application cannot be submitted if it has any number other than three letters of recommendation.
 - Check in often with the people you have asked to write letters. If they did not respond to the invitation, don't wait until the end of the application period to try to solve that problem. The most common error is entering incorrect email addresses, so check them carefully. Spam is occasionally a factor.
 - No extensions of time are granted to applicants or recommenders. Please plan accordingly.

- Be strategic in your invitations, and clear in what you hope a recommender can speak to about your leadership and the impact of your words and actions.
- Reach out to recommenders personally before you invite them using the SmartSimple platform, so they know to look out for the request. This also allows you to decide whether or not they might be a good reference for you. Encourage recommenders to give evidence and examples in their recommendations.
- Letters written in a language other than English will be shown to reviewers in the language in which they were written, to preserve as much of the authentic word selection and the intent of the writing. However, English translations will also be made available to reviewers. We use commonly available services (ex. Google Translate) unless a recommender is able to provide a translation. Please connect using contact@herbkohlphilanthropies.org with any questions about this provision.

Optional Demographic Information Tab

The following information is not part of the scoring or selection process, nor will it be considered as eligibility criteria. It is confidential and will not be revealed to anyone outside of the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation. This data helps the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation understand the impact the awards program is making on students, families, educators, and administrators throughout Wisconsin. Please answer as many of the following 3 questions as you feel comfortable answering.

Optional Demographic Personal Information

Signature and Submission

Once you complete the application, fill in content for all required fields, and receive three letters of recommendation, you are able to submit your application for consideration at the Regional level.



After providing a signature and date, click 'Submit' at the bottom of the 'Signature' section to send in your application for consideration. If there are any required fields left empty or recommendation letters missing, you will receive an error message with links that take you directly to the error. Once you submit, you cannot re-open your application for editing, so make sure to look over your work carefully. The deadline for submitting the Teacher Excellence Application is listed on the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation website. **Late applications are not considered, even if the reason that it is late is not the applicant's fault.**

Questions

Please contact Herb Kohl Educational Foundation at (414) 224-5214 or via email at contact@herbkohlphilanthropies.org with any further questions.

The Herb Kohl Educational Foundation, and program co-sponsors, Association of Wisconsin School Administrators, Cooperative Educational Service Agencies, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Wisconsin Newspaper Association, and Wisconsin Parents Association, do not discriminate against any student, teacher, or principal award applicant on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity of expression, genetic information, marital status, military status, national or ethnic origin, pregnancy or parenting status, political belief or affiliation, race, religion, sex, or sexual orientation in the administration of the foundation's educational programs and activities.