



The Diocese of Harrisburg 2024 Golden Apple Award Teacher Eligibility, Nomination and Selection

Through the generosity and kindness of the Donahue Family foundation, the Golden Apple Award has been established to honor outstanding individuals who devote their lives to teaching in Catholic schools.

The Diocese of Harrisburg recognizes the unique responsibilities Catholic school educators have with regard to the holistic development of those students entrusted to their care. These educators are not only state-certified, but must also meet diocesan catechetical certification standards, which helps to ensure the integration of Gospel values and the Catholic Faith in all subject areas. As such, the Catholic school educator is a special person who guides students as they strive to reach their full intellectual and spiritual potential.

In light of the valuable contributions made by Catholic school educators to the Church and society, the Diocese of Harrisburg demonstrates its appreciation through the Golden Apple Award program.

Teacher Eligibility Requirements

1. A nominee must be a practicing Catholic, a full-time teacher, and must have completed a minimum of five (5) full years in the elementary or secondary school at which he/she is currently employed.
2. A nominee must have a state certification. In addition, an elementary school teacher nominee must have the Basic Catechetical Certificate and a secondary school teacher nominee must be able to verify his/her participation in at least three years of faculty Religion in-services.

Teacher Nomination and Application Process

An elementary school teacher may be nominated by a fellow teacher, a parent, or a student and his/her parent. A secondary school teacher may be nominated by a fellow teacher, a parent, or a student.

1. Teacher nominations are submitted online to the Office of Catholic Education by **February 2, 2024**. Nominations are forwarded to the nominee's principal for approval.

2. Before the nomination is approved, the nominee's principal verifies that all of the eligibility requirements have been satisfied.
3. Once eligibility has been confirmed and the nomination has been approved, the nominee who wishes to be considered for the award completes and submits an online application to the Office of Catholic Education. Applications are then forwarded to the applicant's principal, who is asked to submit a letter of recommendation for the applicant. In addition, the applicant's pastor or school chaplain is asked to submit a letter of recommendation for the applicant.

Completed applications are to be submitted online no later than February 23, 2024.

Teacher Selection Criteria

Please Note: Multiple teachers from one school may be nominated, but *only one* teacher applicant from each diocesan school will be chosen by the Golden Apple selection committee for consideration for the award.

The selection process takes into consideration the following criteria:

1. Verification of nominee's eligibility
2. Applicant's essay
3. Nominator's letter of recommendation
4. Applicant's professional development (including evaluation of applicant's submission of Act 48 hours from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, if applicable)
5. Applicant's commitment to students and school
6. Applicant's teaching skills
7. Applicant's leadership qualities
8. Applicant's service to the Church and community
9. Applicant's witness/example of Christian discipleship as a Catholic educator