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# THE MILKEN NATIONAL EDUCATION AWARDS

Fact Sheet  
**56**

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## ***What is the Milken National Educator Awards Program?***

This program, established by Lowell and Michael Milken, recognizes the important contributions of exemplary educators, particularly teachers. Its purpose is to reward these individuals while calling national attention to their important contributions. Each year, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) recommends outstanding educators for these awards. Those who are selected for the award receive a non-restricted cash award of \$25,000. Teachers are the primary recipients. Elementary and secondary school educators are selected in alternating years.

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## ***What are the selection criteria?***

Educators cannot apply for this award themselves; they must be identified and recommended by others. They must be early to mid-career professionals, with five to 18 years experience in teaching or less than 20 years as administrators. Selection is based on contributions to education, demonstrated leadership, innovative approaches to teaching, and dedication to the field.

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## ***What is the selection process?***

Recommended educators must be entered in the Maryland State Department of Education's *Talent Bank*. Each year, local school systems are asked to identify worthy teachers for the Talent Bank. These candidates, along with previously identified talent, are reviewed by a *select panel* established by the State Department of Education and the Milken Family Foundation. The review at the State level considers (1) written material supporting each candidate and (2) oral testimony from peers, parents, community members, and education administrators. Top educator choices are then recommended to the Milken Family Foundation which is responsible for making final decisions. Milken winners are not identified of their selection for this prestigious award until a surprise announcement of their selection is made. Such announcements are made at special ceremonies throughout the state.

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## ***How can a teacher, principal or assistant principal be recommended for this award?***

School systems are always searching for recommendations for this and other teacher awards. Contact your local public school system and ask to speak to the Superintendent's assistant responsible for the process of identifying potential Milken honorees. You can also contact the Office of Partnerships, Maryland State Department of Education, 410-767-0370.

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***What do  
Milken winners  
receive?***

Milken National Educators win a non-restricted \$25,000 cash award. They are recognized at a State Board of Education meeting and also participate in a national forum sponsored by the Milken Foundation.