



Milken Educator Awards Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Milken Educator Award?

The [Milken Educator Award](#) provides public recognition and an unrestricted financial award of \$25,000 to elementary and secondary school teachers, principals and other education professionals who are furthering excellence in education.

2. How are Milken Educators selected?

Based on guidelines established by the Milken Family Foundation (see FAQ #3), the department of education in each participating state appoints an independent blue-ribbon committee to recommend candidates. There is no formal nomination or application process for the Award.

3. What are the criteria for selection?

The criteria for the selection of outstanding elementary and secondary school teachers, principals and other education professionals as Milken Educators include the following:

- Exceptional educational talent as evidenced by effective instructional practices and student learning results in the classroom and school;
- Exemplary educational accomplishments beyond the classroom that provide models of excellence for the profession;
- Individuals whose contributions to education are largely unheralded yet worthy of the spotlight;
- Early- to mid-career educators who offer strong long-range potential for professional and policy leadership; and
- Engaging and inspiring presence that motivates and impacts students, colleagues and the community.

4. How are the Awards announced?

The main element is surprise! Each year, newly selected recipients are taken completely by surprise at schoolwide assemblies. With an entourage of media and distinguished officials, a Foundation representative or the state chief of education typically notifies the recipient, often accompanied by the governor and other state and federal leaders.

5. Are the recipients required to do anything specific with their monetary awards?

Milken Educators may use their unrestricted \$25,000 Awards in any way they wish. Many past recipients have used their Awards to finance their children's education or their own continuing education. Others have purchased equipment for their schools, established scholarships for their students, and even funded the adoption of children.

6. Are both elementary and secondary school educators selected each year?

The Award alternates each year between elementary and secondary educators.

7. What other benefits besides the \$25,000 do recipients receive?

- The Milken Educator Award's visibility and reputation results in new opportunities for educators to improve education at local, state and national levels. New recipients are invited to join the Milken Educator Network, a group of more than 2,500 distinguished educators, plus other exemplary educators and business leaders from across the country, whose expertise serves as a valuable resource to fellow educators, legislators, school boards and others shaping the future of education.

8. Why does the program put such an emphasis on teacher quality?

Recognizing and rewarding excellent educators has been a hallmark of the Milken Educator Awards program since its inception in 1985. However, due to the lack of opportunities for educators to thrive, more classroom teachers are leaving the profession and fewer young people are pursuing careers in education. The Milken Educator Awards aim to reverse this trend by focusing public attention on the need for able, caring and creative people to join the teaching profession in order to improve achievement for all students.

9. Besides the Milken Educator Awards, what other ways has the Milken Family Foundation worked toward meeting the crucial need for highly effective teachers?

While Milken Educators are a testament to America's many talented educators, the need to attract, develop, motivate and retain more highly effective teachers remains a profound challenge. To address this need, the Milken Family Foundation created a complementary initiative to the Milken Educator Awards, known as TAP™: The System for Teacher and Student Advancement, to restructure and thus revitalize the teaching profession. Through sustained opportunities for career advancement, ongoing school-based professional development, instructionally focused accountability and performance-based compensation, TAP™ has already demonstrated meaningful progress in drawing more teachers to careers in K-12 education—and keeping them there. What's more, TAP teachers and schools produce higher student achievement growth than their non-TAP counterparts. Since its inception in 1999, TAP has expanded dramatically, now reaching more than 20,000 teachers and 200,000 students. Based on TAP's rapid growth and strong results, as well as increasing demand for comprehensive teacher quality reforms nationwide, in 2005 Lowell Milken established the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) as an independent public charity. NIET manages and supports TAP and the Best Practices Center with the goal of an effective teacher for every classroom in America.

10. What are other areas of interest for the Milken Family Foundation?

The Milken Family Foundation was established by Lowell and Michael Milken in 1982 with the mission to discover and advance inventive and effective ways of helping people help themselves and those around them lead productive and satisfying lives. The Foundation advances this mission principally through the various programs it initiates and carries out in the areas of education and medical research. In addition to the Milken Educator Awards and TAP™, core initiatives include the following:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Milken Scholars• Mike's Math Club• Lowell Milken Center | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Milken Archive of Jewish Music: The American Experience• Epilepsy Young Investigator Awards• Jewish Educator Awards |
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11. What is the best way to contact the Milken Family Foundation?

Visit www.mff.org. For more information, call the Milken Family Foundation at (310) 570-4775. Follow the Milken Family Foundation on www.twitter.com/milken, www.facebook.com/milkeneducatorawards and www.youtube.com/milkenaward.