

Dos and Don'ts for Successful Award Nominations

Each year, SCCDAA recognizes a select group of individuals for their significant contributions to the Southwestern Community College community, as well as individual outstanding performance and achievements through four prestigious awards.

Distinguished Administrator
Equity Champion
Emerging Leader
Team Jaguar

Following are tips and suggestions for creating the best possible nominations.

Do: Plan Ahead

It's not too soon to begin collecting the information you need now; this will ensure you have enough time to complete your submission(s).

How to plan ahead:

- Send requests for letters of recommendation to supervisors and/or district leaders and set reminders for yourself so you don't forget to follow up.
- Collect basic information on the nominee, including their work history.
- Begin researching and writing the short paragraph criteria explanations.

Do: Save your work offline

Make sure you have a copy of your nomination data saved on your desktop or backup drive as you complete the form. With a web-based platform, a network interruption could wipe out your work before you have a chance to hit save.

Do: Collaborate online

Use Google Docs to collaborate with others, as well as to back up your nominations.

Do: Talk about the outcome rather than the process

The details of how a mission was accomplished are not as important as the benefits and changes it produced. Focus on sharing about the impacts of the nominee's work in their role and career, providing specific examples.

Do: Review one last time

Read your nomination one last time with fresh eyes or have someone give it one final read for you. Imagine you are on the awards committee reviewing multiple nomination forms — what will make your nominee stand out? Does the nomination fully convey how outstanding they are?

Do: Submit nominations on time

Nominations are due in April through the online awards platform. Once the nomination window closes, you'll no longer have access to submit your forms.

Don't: Leave it to the last minute

The nomination window opens in late February, and yet many nominators wait until the final week of the deadline and end up running out of time. Life is unpredictable, and we know the spring semester can be very busy. Don't assume you'll be able to complete the form at the last minute.

Dos and Don'ts for Successful Award Nominations

Don't: Forget to include a letter of recommendation

A minimum of one letter of recommendation is required for the Distinguished Administrator of the Year and the Equity Champion awards. It is highly recommended to include a letter of recommendation for the Emerging Leader award. Prioritize letters from superintendents and supervisors, followed by testimonials from colleagues, community members, students and people who can speak to the excellence and record of the nominee. Please refer to the Program Overview for file size and document limits.

Don't: Leave out specific examples or provide incorrect information

Include verifiable accomplishments that explain exactly how the nominee has excelled in each of the criteria explanations. Give specific examples of what the nominee has accomplished. Make sure that any data, awards, grants or other achievements are listed correctly.

Major pitfalls to avoid:

- Criteria explanations and supporting documents with spelling or grammatical errors or incorrect information.
- Nominating non-SCCDAA members for awards
- Missing the deadline.

These tips were adapted from the Association of California School Administrators' awards program.