



**The RISE Award** is a national honor given each year to classified school employees who are doing extraordinary and inspirational things in their schools and communities to promote quality education, foster safe and positive learning environments, and ensure student success.

*The Recognizing Achievement in Classified School Employees Act - Public Law 116-13* – which was passed by Congress in 2019. The act was passed with overwhelming bipartisan support in the House of Representatives and Senate and creates the first national U.S. Department of Education award of its kind and directs the U.S. Secretary of Education to establish a national award program, Recognizing Inspiring Schools Award (RISE) – to honor exemplary classified school employees – (please reference definition in legislation) for their outstanding contributions to quality education in the United States and serve as our unsung heroes.

To educate the public on the important, and often invisible, educational support rendered by some of the hardest-working people in our schools – they serve in the capacity of the glue to the school. In short, to remind the school community that it takes a village to ensure student success.

The award recognize excellence exhibited by full- or part-time classified school employees who provide exemplary service to students in pre-kindergarten through high school.

Each year the U.S. Department of Education solicit for all U.S. states to submit their top two exemplary classified employee nomination (s) for the opportunity to be selected and recognized as the national honoree by the Secretary of Education.

- (1) Classified school employees provide valuable service in the United States.
- (2) Classified school employees provide essential services, such as transportation, facilities, maintenance and operations, food service, safety, and health care.

- (3) Classified school employees play a vital role in providing for the welfare and safety of students.
- (4) Classified school employees strive for excellence in all areas of service to the education community.
- (5) Exemplary classified school employees should be recognized for their outstanding contributions to quality education in the United States.

In continuation, nationally, the RISE award collaborates with states to nominate some incredible unsung heroes who serve as the glue to our U.S. schools.

The department has created a **State Implementation toolkit** designed to support all states interested. The State Implementation toolkit not only provides information and step by step guidelines on nominating deserving employees but helps to promote Recognizing Inspiring Schools Employee (RISE) Award, a program that recognizes and honors classified employees across the nation.

Help spread the word. Share this information about Recognizing Inspiring Schools Award (RISE) with your state school districts so deserving classified employees are nominated for this award. If you have any questions, please reach out to Frances W. Hopkins, RISE Award Director at [RISE@ed.gov](mailto:RISE@ed.gov).